The MARVELLOUS
and the MONSTROUS
in the Sculpture of
Twelfth-Century Europe

KIRK AMBROSE

THE MARVELLOUS AND THE MONSTROUS
IN THE SCULPTURE OF TWELFTH-CENTURY EUROPE

BOYDELL STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Series Editors
Dr Julian Luxford
Dr Asa Simon Mittman

This series aims to provide a forum for debate on the art and architecture of the Middle Ages. It will cover all media, from manuscript illuminations to maps, tapestries, carvings, wall-paintings and stained glass, and all periods and regions, including Byzantine art. Both traditional and more theoretical approaches to the subject are welcome.

Proposals or queries should be sent in the first instance to the editors or to the publisher, at the addresses given below.

Dr Julian Luxford, School of Art History, University of St Andrews, 79 North Street, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AL, UK

Dr Asa Simon Mittman, Department of Art and Art History, California State University at Chico, Chico, CA 95929–0820, USA

Boydell & Brewer, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 3DF, UK

ALREADY PUBLISHED

The Art of Anglo-Saxon England
Catherine E. Karkov

English Medieval Misericords: The Margins of Meaning
Paul Hardwick

English Medieval Shrines
John Crook

Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces
Edited by Elina Gertsman and Jill Stevenson

THE MARVELLOUS AND THE MONSTROUS IN THE SCULPTURE OF TWELFTH-CENTURY EUROPE

Kirk Ambrose

For Freddie and Helen

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

> We do not know what a dragon *means*, just as we do not know
> the meaning of the universe, but there is something in the
> image of the dragon that is congenial to man's imagination,
> and thus the dragon arises in many latitudes and ages. It is, one
> might say, a *necessary* monster.
>
> Jorge Luis Borges, *The Book of Imaginary Beings*

This book began at an ice-cream social. A few minutes after introducing herself, an octogenarian described to me how she had compulsively read through Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series, which traces the romantic entanglements of three high school students: a girl, a vampire, and a werewolf. Though my conversation partner acknowledged that there was something to be feared in these creatures of the night, ultimately these books were gripping for her because as a teenager she had been sexually attracted to monsters, had used them to navigate the troubled waters of her adolescence. My own snobbish tastes in literature had previously blinded me to the positive work that Meyer's writings could perform. The ambiguous status of imaginary creatures, which can simultaneously attract and repel, began to intrigue me, for I had long regarded representations of monsters largely in negative terms: as allegories for menacing Others, as apotropaic totems, as embodiments of vices, and so on. How, I wondered, might the monsters that feature throughout medieval art look if one acknowledged the possibility that they could service positive ends?

include Dan Boord, Chris Braider, Marilyn Brown, Scott Bruce, James Córdova, Diane Conlin, Claire Farago, Deborah Haynes, Bob Nauman, Carole Newlands, J.P. Park, and Beth Robertson. Peter Beal offered expert insights into St Francis and Scott Stewart was a generous conversation partner and expert in fields completely new to me. Scott will doubtless notice in the following pages the traces of our many chats. At Boydell & Brewer, Caroline Palmer expressed early enthusiasm for this project and Asa Mittman, initially an anonymous reviewer for the press, revealed his identity to me and offered many helpful suggestions, which have improved this study in many ways.

Sections of this book have been presented as talks at various venues during the past few years, including at the Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Paris; the International Congress of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver; The Power Institute Foundation for Art & Visual Culture at the University of Sydney; the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; the University of Pennsylvania; and Yale University. In all cases, audience members offered comments and questions that helped nuance my thinking.

Portions of Chapters 1 and 2 appeared in substantially different guises in, respectively, the 2008 issue of *Studies in Iconography* and in the volume *The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*, edited by Sherry Lindquist and published by Ashgate in 2011. I am grateful for permission to reproduce those findings here.

Over the past few years my wife, Kim, has patiently endured my countless ramblings on the subject of imaginary creatures. Doubtless at some point she feared that she had married a monster. I thank her for her good nature and patience, as well as her unflagging support. Finally, I would like to express my profound debt to my (still small) children, Helen and Freddie, who have taught me to more fully appreciate the wonder and necessity of monsters. This book is dedicated to them.

Despite all the help that I have received, studying monsters has repeatedly reminded me that I am all too human. Any errors in the following pages are entirely my own.

<div style="text-align: right;">

Boulder, Colorado, USA
1 January 2013

</div>

ABBREVIATIONS

CCM	Corpus consuetudinum monasticarum
CCCM	Corpus christianorum continuatio Mediaevalis
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MGH SS	Monumenta Germanicae Historica Scriptores
PL	Jean-Paul Migne, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina.* 221 vols. Paris: Jean-Paul Migne et al., 1841–64

INTRODUCTION: APPROACHING MONSTERS

A MONSTER SPEAKS

The fragmentary *Ruodlieb*, an epic poem probably written by an eleventh-century German monk,[1] includes a remarkable verbal exchange between the eponymous hero and a captive dwarf. The hominoid begs to be freed, promising to lead Ruodlieb to hidden treasure, and frames his plea in terms of the unreliability of human speech:

> Absit, ut inter nos umquam regnaverit haec fraus;
> non tam longaevi tunc essemus neque sani.
> Inter vos nemo loquitur, nisi corde doloso.
> Hinc nec ad aetatem maturam pervenietis;
> pro cuiusque fide sunt eius tempora vitae.
> Non aliter loquimur, nisi sicut corde tenemus,
> neve cibos varios edimus morbos generantes,
> longius incolomes hinc nos durabimus ac vos.

> Far be it that such fraud prevail among us dwarves!
> For then we would not be so long-lived or so healthy.
> Among you, no one speaks unless deceitfully;
> And therefore you will not attain a ripe old age.
> Each man's life span accords with his fidelity.
> We speak not otherwise than we hold in our hearts,

---

[1]   Werner Friedrich Braun argues that the poem accords with many of the ideals of Cluniac monasticism; *Studien zum Ruodlieb: Ritterideal, Erzählstruktur, und Darstellungsstil* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1962), 35–38. On the dwarf in this poem, see Claude Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la literature allemande du Moyen Âge: Contribution à l'étude du merveilleux médiéval* (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1982), 2: 57–73.

FIG. 1. SOLOMON
AND MARCULF,
OURENSE
CATHEDRAL

Nor eat the various foods that bring on illnesses;
And therefore we stay sound much longer than you do.[2]

The English translation distinguishes between "dwarves" and "man" for the sake of clarity, but masks the ambiguity of a speech that alternates between collective terms, such as *cuiusque* and *eius*, and the contradistinctive "us" (*nos*) and "you" (*vos*). If uncertainties in the Latin phraseology mirror the ontological ambiguity of the dwarf, the accusatory "you" clearly implicates all humans as liars. Even if the dwarf exaggerates his point in hope of gaining his freedom, he offers a utopian vision of truthful speech that is only possible for those who are not human. Far from casting the dwarf as a monstrous Other, this passage effectively imagines an inversion of the traditional Christian hierarchy of being, at the top of which man exercises dominion over all earthly creatures, for the dwarf provides a human with a moral lesson. Indeed, the dwarf keeps his word by showing the exiled knight the location of the treasure and then predicts that Ruodlieb will marry Heriburg. In short, this monster offers the knight much.

We might regard the *Ruodlieb* episode to be an exceptional case, for it runs counter to the negative connotations surrounding dwarves found elsewhere in medieval culture, including the visual arts. The south tympanum of the cathedral of Orense, for example, shows the dwarf Marcolf conversing with King Solomon.[3] The earliest manuscript that

[2] *Waltharius and Ruodlieb*, ed. and trans. Dennis M. Kratz (New York: Garland, 1984), 198–99.
[3] Sérafín Moralejo Álvarez, "La Rencontre de Salomon et de la Reine de Saba: De la Bible de Roda aux portails gothiques", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* (1981): 97.

includes the text of the satiric debate
between these two figures dates to 1410,
although the text bears the impress of
twelfth-century thought and the tradition
may date back even further.[4] Though there
are variations in the textual tradition, all
versions feature a dwarf who confounds
the wisdom of the wise king through his
crude humor and sophistries. A similar
inversion of expectations can be identified
in twelfth-century texts on the wood of
the cross suggesting that King Solomon
had a dwarf-like brother who married the
Queen of Sheba.[5] The Ourense dwarf's small
size might, thus, be understood to offer a
physical sign of his moral debasement (fig.
1), a notion further underscored by the
figure's placement below that of Solomon.

If monsters in twelfth-century sculpture
could advance negative moralizing agendas,
the positive aspects of the dwarf's complex
role in the *Ruodlieb* likewise have analogues.
Artists and poets of this period could
portray monsters in a sympathetic light.[6] In a miniature from a German
martyrology (fig. 2), Saint Christopher features a dog head.[7] Although
contemporary Byzantine artists occasionally represented the saint in
this manner, Western artists typically represent him without an animal
head, though sometimes as a giant. Indeed, medieval ethnographers
in the West typically described dog-headed men, or cynocephalics, as
ferocious man-eaters and traces of these fears may be found in the wild
gesticulations of the humans that look on to this enormous figure, who is
identified by an inscription on the crenellated wall as "Saint Christopher
the Chananean". This nomenclature refers to the belief that Christopher

FIG. 2.
ST CHRISTOPHER,
WÜRTTEMBERGISCHE
LANDESBILIOTHEK,
HIST. FOL. 415,
FOL. 50r

4   Jan M. Ziolkowski, *Solomon and Marcolf* (Cambridge, MA: Department of the
Classics, Harvard University, 2008), 6–12.
5   Wilhelm Meyer, "Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes", *Abhandlungen der philosophisch-
philogischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 16, no. 2 (1881):
109–10; English trans. in Ziolkowski, *Solomon*, 324–25.
6   See, for example, John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and
Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 178–96; Claude Lecouteux, *Les
monstres dans la pensée médiévale européene*, 3rd edn (Paris: Presses de l'Université de
Paris-Sorbonne, 1995); J. Voisenet, *Hommes et bêtes dans le monde médiévale: Le bestiare
des clercs du Ve au XIIe siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000).
7   Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Hist. fol. 415, fol. 50r. See the
discussion of this miniature in David Gordon White, *The Myth of the Dog Man* (Chicago,
IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 34–36.

FIG. 3. SIREN
NURSING,
ST-URSANNE

came from the race of giant, dog-headed "Canines". Twelfth-century writers often construed these creatures as proxies for Saracens or other enemies of the Church[8] and Romanesque cynocephalics, such as a capital from St-Reverin, typically emphasize their menacing aspect.[9] But in addition to cutting a ferocious figure, the painter of the German martyrology introduced a halo, an unmistakable sign of sanctity. This saint is rendered as awesome, in both contrary senses of the word.

Empathetic representations of monsters can be found in twelfth-century sculptures as well. On a capital at St-Ursanne in Switzerland (fig. 3), a mother, with legs and two fish tails, suckles a hominoid as individuals look on from either side.[10] This bizarre, albeit tender scene complements a widespread belief that sirens could be good mothers, poignantly evoked in an episode in *Tristan de Nanteuil*, a fourteenth-century *chanson de geste*, in which a siren saves a shipwrecked infant by nursing him for fourteen days.[11] To be sure, longstanding exegetical traditions associated sirens with rapaciousness and various vices, especially lust,[12] but less negatively moralizing understandings of these imaginary creatures circulated as well. Indeed, nothing in the St-Ursanne example

[8]　Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 67–69; Deborah Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 159–60.

[9]　See, for example, Leopold Krezenbacher, *Kynokephale Dämonen südeuropäischer Volksdichtung: Vergleichende Studien zu Mythen, Sagen, Maskenbräuchen um Kynokephaloi, Werwölfe und südlawische Pesoglavci* (Munich: R. Trofenik, 1968); Charles Lecouteux, "Les Cynocéphales. Étude d'une tradition tératologique de lantiquitæe au XIIe s", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 24 (1981): 117–28; James Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 77–81.

[10]　Other examples of this iconography on capitals can be found at Saint-Ursanne, San Vincente (Serrapeo), and Strasbourg Cathedral. See also Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx, "Du monstre androcéphale au monstre humanisé: À propos des sirens et des centaures, et de leur famille, dans le haut Moyen Âge et à l'époque romane", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 45 (2002): 55–67. In other medieval examples, sirens nurse other creatures, such as a fish in the tympanum Pieve di Corsignano. This may relate to ancient images of Terra, who was represented nursing various animals.

[11]　*Tristan de Nanteuil*, ed. K.V. Sinclair (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1971), 92; cited by Leclercq-Marx, "Du monstre androcéphale au monstre humanisé", 60.

[12]　Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx, *La sirène dans la pensée et dans l'art de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Âge: Du mythe païen au symbole chrétien* (Brussels: Académie royale de Belgique, 1997); William Travis, "Of Sirens and Onocentaurs: A Romanesque Apocalypse at Montceaux-l'Etoile", *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no. 45 (2002): 29–62.

overtly suggests anything to fear in these creatures. There may even be something to admire in the nurturing attitude of the mother.

Such cases prompt me to consider in the present volume the possibility that Romanesque carvings of centaurs, griffins, and sirens served complex functions, beyond mere vehicles for servicing negative agendas. Medieval audiences might fear and loathe monsters, regarding them as analogues for a host of menacing Others, but these emotional responses were only part of a broad spectrum of needs that representations of imaginary creatures could address. The following pages seek to understand the complex uses of imaginary creatures that feature in so many Romanesque sculptures. A compelling case could be made that monsters feature more commonly and more prominently in the visual arts of the twelfth century than, say, in the literature of the period.[13] Monstrous figures featured in thousands of monumental projects and were typically more than marginal curiosities, for they occupy prominent positions within built environments, from capitals to tympana that engage the viewer as she enters and moves through sacred spaces. The great care in articulating their forms, which necessarily involved a remarkable outpouring of energy and resources, attest to the fact that carvings of monsters were of paramount concern to both artists and patrons.

Despite their physical and visual prominence within built environments across Europe, Romanesque monsters have been somewhat marginalized in scholarship and have never been the subject of a scholarly monograph. To date the most pervasive scholarly trend in teratology has been to establish taxonomies of monsters in materials as diverse as Gothic miniatures, Early Christian ivories, and Early Modern broadsheets.[14] This iconographic approach has established nomenclature, as well as identifying exegetical traditions associated with various creatures, but it has likewise tended to isolate objects from their specific cultural contexts. Studies of this order have been undertaken relatively recently in a number of art historical subfields, especially those of later periods.[15] But how twelfth-century sculptures of monsters related to the complex concerns of their patrons and audiences remains relatively unexplored territory.

In addition to examining monsters with an eye to historical specificity, the present volume seeks to understand these figures in terms of the physicality implicit to sculpture. A host of studies have considered how

---

[13]   See, for example, Lecouteux, *Monstres dans la pensée médiévale*, 7.
[14]   Taxonomies feature prominently in, among others, Friedman, *Monstrous Races*; Claude Kappler, *Monstres, demons, et merveilles à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris: Payot, 1980); David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature* (Buffalo, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Rudolf Wittkower, "Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 159–97.
[15]   See, for example, the collected studies in Asa Mittman and Peter Dendle, *Research Companion to Monsters and Monstrous* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).

more than any other medium available to medieval artists, sculpture protruded into the space of the viewer to evoke a real presence.[16] This power extends to figures that are much smaller than life-size, such as the many carved bodies that extend and twist away from capital baskets to assert a salient physicality. Around the year 1100, there began a remarkable outpouring of energy on technical innovations that fostered the production of incredibly salient sculptures. In the case of saints and other notable figures, the desire for articulating a presence has been seen to support the ambitions of a faith that was conceived in increasingly somatic terms.[17]

How carvings of monsters related to this phenomenon of physicality is of central concern here. Medieval artists were often extremely inventive in the articulation of the forms of monsters, exceeding the categories of the monstrous established in antiquity, but, even so, they never created monsters *de novo*. Rather, they combined parts of human and animal bodies in myriad ways with great élan. In many cases these creatures offered a chance for sculptors to experiment with the tools of their trade, with the technical possibilities of chisels and drills. In other words, the protean bodies of monsters offered a field for technical, formal, and even iconographic experimentation.

ART HISTORIANS AND ROMANESQUE MONSTERS

The relative lack of sustained studies of twelfth-century monsters in art may seem somewhat paradoxical given that art historians have long posited their importance for the analysis of medieval art. This recognition came at a relatively early date in comparison to some other fields within the humanities.[18] In 1936, for example, J.R.R. Tolkien enjoined critics to turn

---

[16]   See the probing remarks of Ilene Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 152–55; Meyer Schapiro, *Romanesque Architectural Sculpture: The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures*, ed. Linda Seidel (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 154–84; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 297–310; Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1–24; Thomas E.A. Dale, "Convention, Vision, and Real Presence in Romanesque Portrait Sculpture", *Gesta* 46 (2007): 101–20; Catherine Soussloff, "Like a Performance: Performativity and the Historicized Body, from Bellori to Mapplethorpe", in *Acting on the Past: Historical Performance Across the Disciplines*, ed. Mark Franko and Annette Richards (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), 69–98.

[17]   See, for example, Thomas E.A. Dale "The Individual, the Resurrected Body and Romanesque Portraiture: The Tomb of Rudolf von Schwaben in Merseberg", *Speculum* 77 (2002): 707–43.

[18]   See the helpful historiographical overview in Thomas E.A. Dale, "The Monstrous", in *A Companion to Medieval Art*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 253–73; Debra Strickland, "Introduction: The Future is Necessarily Monstrous", *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 2 (2010): 1–13,

their attention to the monsters in *Beowulf*.[19] Previously, literary historians had largely regarded Grendel and the other descendents of Cain within the epic as merely products of a superstitious age, preferring to mine this poem for what it could reveal about the grammar and vocabulary of early English. Tolkien, by contrast, regarded Beowulf's battles as signaling a transition from pagan heroics, exemplified in figures like Ulysses, to a Christian sensibility, which favored virtues of humility and meekness. This sensitive exegesis suggested that close readings of monsters could offer a nuanced view of medieval attitudes.

Almost one century earlier, in his highly influential 1843 iconographic study, Adolphe Didron provided a lengthy analysis of the monster (*monstre*) in a twelfth-century Psalter miniature of the seven-headed beast described in the book of Revelation.[20] Didron pointed to a central paradox of the work, namely the presence of halos, typically an attribute reserved for saints, on each of the monster's heads. The image, he argued, appropriates a traditional sign of sanctity in order to signal that infidels worshipped the monster. In identifying in this iconography a transgression of norms, Didron articulated what has become a standard approach to the analysis of monsters in art, as when the Abbé Charles-Auguste Auber argued that monsters embodied the figures of heretics and other enemies of the church.[21]

During the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin recognized that monsters were a significant part of the Romanesque sculptor's repertoire, but, in an uncharacteristic move for these Jesuit priests, argued that these figures had no symbolic meaning, but rather served a decorative function. This argument is somewhat surprising given that their study included a rather lengthy catalogue of the types of monsters that frequently appear in medieval art.[22] Given the number of examples they cite from a wide variety of sources, one might reasonably call into question their monolithic interpretation, for to label something as decorative is not to offer an exhaustive account. Studies by Ernst

http://differentvisions.org/one.html. The second volume of *Different Visions* is dedicated to studies of monsters. (As it appeared just as I was finishing this manuscript, I was unable to take full advantage of Mittman and Dendle, *Research Companion to Monsters and Monstrous*.)

[19] J.R.R. Tolkien, "The Monster and the Critics", *Proceedings of the British Academy* 22 (1936): 245–95.

[20] Adolphe Napoléon Didron, *Iconographie chrétienne* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1843), 165–66. Didron uses the word "monster" eight times in his study. Monsters were commonly read in terms of strident moral schemes in the middle of the nineteenth century. In a discussion of the Autun tympanum, for Arcisee de Caumont uses the word "monstre" to describe the demon of the psychostasis and interprets the figure as an "emblême du mal"; *Abécédaire ou rudiment d'archéologie* (Paris: Derache, 1850), 112.

[21] Charles-Auguste Auber, *Histoire et théorie du symbolisme religieux avant et depuis le christianisme* (Paris, 1870–71), 2: 588–605.

[22] Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin, *Nouveaux mélanges d'archéologie, d'histoire et de literature sur le moyen age* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Fils, 1874), 197–98.

Gombrich and Oleg Grabar have demonstrated that ornament can serve, among others, specific psychological and social needs.[23] Martin Powers recently considered how Classical Chinese artifacts "can encode norms of selfhood … in its mode of figuration, in its spatial epistemology".[24] Ornaments can inform ideology.

As staples of monumental sculpture, Romanesque monsters played a prominent role in figuring spaces for their medieval viewers. Yet one might likewise be mindful of the prominent role that monsters have played for modern interpreters, who have sometimes used the figures of monsters to impose order on their sense of a medieval past. Within the field of art history, the most salient example of this practice can be identified in Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's restoration of monuments. Beginning in the 1840s, this polymath introduced gargoyles on the balustrade of Notre-Dame in Paris and on the exterior of the choir at St-Remi, Reims, without any archeological justification. On one level, these sculptural interventions can be seen to conform to Viollet-le-Duc's belief that the modern architect could confer on historical buildings a state of unity, more perfect than existed at any moment in history.[25] Accordingly, the modern gargoyles, which were largely the products of the architect's imagination, rendered the edifice more fully medieval, for this era was widely regarded by nineteenth-century contemporaries as monstrous. Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame* perhaps did the most to circulate this view, as in this description of a monstrous head carved within the "question chamber" in one of the cathedral towers: "In the center lay a leather mattress, placed almost flat upon the ground, over which hung a strap provided with a buckle, attached to a brass ring in the mouth of a flat-nosed monster carved in the keystone of the vault."[26] This carved creature echoes the monstrosity of Pierre Torterue, the official torturer, as well as the novel's anti-hero, Quasimodo. Michael Camille argued in a posthumous publication that Viollet-le-Duc's gargoyles further can be seen as an attempt to negotiate the monsters of modernity, including,

[23] Ernst Gombrich, *A Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art*, 2nd edn (London: Cornell University Press, 1984), 217–50; Oleg Grabar, *The Mediation of Ornament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 226–37. See also Catherine Karkov and George Hardin Brown, eds, *Anglo-Saxon Styles* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 1–10.

[24] Martin Powers, *Pattern and Person: Ornament, Society and Self in Classical China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 315.

[25] "Restaurer un édifice, ce n'est pas l'entretenir, le réparer ou le refaire, c'est la rétablir dans un état complet qui peut n'avoir jamais existé à un moment donné." Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle* (Paris: B. Bance, 1858), 8: 14. Translated by M.F. Hearn as *The Architectural Theory of Viollet-le-Duc: Readings and Commentary* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 269.

[26] "Au milieu gisait un matelas de cuir presque posé à terre, sur lequel pendait une courroie à boucle, rattachée à un anneau de cuivre que mordait un monstre camard, sculpté dans la clef de la voûte", Victor Hugo, *Notre Dame de Paris*, 2 vols (Paris: Charpentier, 1850), 2: 116.

among others, social displacements accompanying urbanization, political turmoil, and the Industrial Revolution.[27] The resonance of these creatures, largely the products of Viollet-le-Duc's imagination, has become widely celebrated, whether in the writings of Sigmund Freud or in replicas for decorating suburban gardens: monsters have offered a vehicle for modern audiences to imagine a medieval past.

Gombrich is one of many who have questioned whether representations of monsters were necessarily carved for human audiences, suggesting that in many cases these served an apotropaic function.[28] Humor features prominently in this analysis, meaning that monsters can both provoke fear and generate laughter. The notion that monsters offered medieval artists a release from social and religious pressures has informed many readings of monsters, including the work of Michael Camille and Meyer Schapiro on the Romanesque sculpture of Souillac (fig. 34).[29] Many specific gestures, including grimaces, tongue wagging, and genital displays of Sheela-na-gigs, have been interpreted by Christa Sütterlin to buttress the hypothesis that artworks could serve an apotropaic function.[30] But I am unaware of any evidence of a medieval belief that monstrous carvings frightened away hordes of demons, although this is not to discount this hypothesis entirely. As anthropologists have demonstrated, the rationale underlying many important social practices remain unvoiced.[31] Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo, for one, has interpreted a prayer inscribed on the abacus above a Silos cloister capital featuring birds attacking harpies and lions allegorically: the visual imagery manifests the desire to protect the faithful from harm.[32]

Based on a close reading of monastic texts on demons, as well as careful examination of a number of Romanesque sculptures, Émile Mâle influentially suggested that these creatures embodied the adversaries of

[27]   Michael Camille, *The Gargoyles of Notre Dame: Medievalism and the Monsters of Modernity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[28]   Gombrich, *Sense of Order*, 250–84. See also Ernst Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art* (New York: International Universities Press, 1952); Peter Dinzelbacher, "Monster und Dämonen am Kirchenbau", in *Dämonen, Monster, Fabelwesen*, ed. Ulrich Müller and Werner Wunderlich (St Gallen: UVK, 1999), 103–26.

[29]   See, for example, their essays on Souillac, which although extremely different in approach, cast the monstrous in similarly liberating terms: Camille, "Mouths and Meanings: Towards an Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art", in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1993), 43–57. Meyer Schapiro, "The Sculptures of Souillac", reprinted in Schapiro, *Romanesque Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1977), 102–30.

[30]   Christa Sütterlin, "Universals in Apotropaic Symbolism: A Behavioral and Comparative Approach to Some Medieval Sculptures", *Leonardo* 22 (1989): 65–74; eadem, "Ethological Aspects of Apotropaic Symbolism in Art", in *Sociobiology and the Arts*, ed. J.B. Bedaux and Brett Cooke (Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 55–78.

[31]   See, for example, the classic discussion of the *habitus* in Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 52–65.

[32]   Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo, "The Saint's Capital: Talisman in the Cloister", in *Decorations for the Holy Dead: Visual Embellishments on Tombs and Shrines of Saints*, ed. Stephen Lamia and Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 111–28.

the spiritual struggles that communities of monks, as soldiers of Christ (*miles Christi*), engaged each day.[33] To be sure, Mâle, who was a Catholic priest, privileged monastic audiences in his reading and does not consider, say, lay responses, but it must be stressed that the attempt to understand these works in terms of the religious imagination of the time is remarkable for taking these images seriously in historically specific terms. For him, fantastic creatures were not simply symptomatic of the irrationality often attributed to the Middle Ages, but served the needs of religious communities. Mâle tended to discount the importance of the sculptural medium, which he generally saw as derivative from manuscript painting; like the texts authored in medieval scriptoria, images of monsters and demons functioned as a rather disembodied speculum of their medieval communities.

A number of scholars have adopted a similarly textual approach to the grounding of their interpretations of the monstrous as transgressing a moral or social order, literally constituting an Other. Through a careful reading of Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job*, as well as its reception, Conrad Rudolph cast monsters in an early twelfth-century manuscript as serving an exhortative function, as encouraging monks to refrain from bestial behavior, including licentiousness and violence.[34] Debra Strickland's wide-ranging study of monsters in medieval art frames the question from a similar perspective, albeit in a manner strongly informed by anthropological terms.[35] This far-reaching study posits that monsters typically embodied and caricaturized enemies, especially Saracens and Jews. Ultimately, representations of these feared creatures served to define Christian identity through a process of distinction and differentiation, contributing to the formation of a persecuting society.[36] Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, monsters in medieval art contributed to rendering medieval culture monstrous.

The thirteenth century has been identified as a watershed moment in this development in, among others, studies by Sara Lipton and Ruth Mellinkoff.[37] For example, at this time a monstrous visual vocabulary,

[33] Émile Mâle, *Religious Art in France, the Twelfth Century: A Study in the Origins of Medieval Iconography*, trans. Marthiel Mathews (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 364–76.

[34] C. Rudolph, *Violence and Daily Life: Reading, Art, and Polemics in the Cîteaux Moralia in Job* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 56–62.

[35] Strickland, *Making Monsters*, 9–20. See also Wolfgang Kayser, *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1963); Rhonda Knight, "Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles: Representing Colonial Fantasies in Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica*", *Studies in Iconography* 22 (2001): 55–86.

[36] R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (New York: Blackwell, 1987).

[37] Sarah Lipton, *Images of Intolerance: The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the Bible Moralisée* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999); Ruth Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: Signs of Otherness in Northern European Art of the Later Middle Ages*, 2 vols (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

including hooked noses and disfigured faces, was widely applied to representations of Jews. Similarly, representations of women in late medieval texts often incorporate monstrous features, forcefully inscribing the female body as somehow deviant from the normative male body.[38] By contrast, twelfth-century art fails to clearly and consistently conflate monstrous features with a specific Other, whether Jew, Saracen, heretic, or woman. Rather, monsters during this period seemed to be regarded with a general mixture of curiosity and anxiety. With respect to the Marvels of the East, humanoids that were believed to inhabit the edges of the Earth, John Bloch Friedman argues the medieval commentators and artists were not necessarily interested in the specific geographic or ethnographic knowledge passed down by Pliny and other classical authors.[39] Rather, there appears to have been a widespread sense that these monsters lived beyond human civilization.

Representations of monsters need not make any direct reference to the real world. In addition to the potential for embodying artists' fantasies, mnemotechniques, as Frances Yates and Mary Carruthers both admirably demonstrated, often relied on fantastical images as a way to render ideas memorable.[40] Accordingly, an idea is easier to recall if it is associated with, say, a violent or incongruous image. Carruthers in particular has emphasized the agency of the individual in crafting thoughts, including the fantastical, which has implications for the visual arts. Monsters, which stand outside normative categories, offered one productive aide memoire.

I do not deny that twelfth-century monsters aided in the project of defining Others, of frightening demons, and warning against the pitfalls of monstrous behavior. Indeed, throughout this volume I point out aspects of carvings that support such readings. Nevertheless, circumspection is warranted in such a hermeneutic, which risks caricaturing the Middle Ages as irrational or otherwise backward. Robert Mills, Caroline Dinshaw, and others have noted that casting the Middle Ages in terms of an alterity, as, say, essentially more violent or superstitious, effectively serves to confer a superior status to the present, comforting ourselves in the superiority of our own twenty-first-century subjectivities and practices.[41] For this reason, the negative glossing that commonly features in scholarship on medieval

---

38   Sarah Alison Miller, *Medieval Monstrosity and the Female Body* (New York: Routledge, 2010). See also Wendy O. Doniger, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
39   Friedman, *Monstrous Races*. See also Wittkower, "Marvels of the East".
40   Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); eadem, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge, 1966).
41   Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Robert Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2005), 7–22.

monsters offers an ideal case study to reconsider our position vis-à-vis the past, to open up alternative modes of understanding.

Much recent scholarship has begun to construe monsters in less oppositional, less stridently moral terms. The category of the wondrous has provided one productive avenue toward this end. Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park have argued that a hallmark of high culture from the twelfth through eighteenth centuries in Western Europe was a fascination with wonders, the territory of monsters.[42] Caroline Walker Bynum has more thoroughly explored this sense of wonder in twelfth-century culture, including werewolves and chimeras.[43] Bynum identifies the presence of a non-appropriative attitude in the twelfth century, one that could respect difference without proffering negative judgment.

Others have cast the monstrous as a liberating field for the artist. Michael Camille went so far as to psychologize this process, claiming that the creation of fantastic creatures served to liberate fantasies of artists.[44] Acknowledging his debt to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin's reading of Rabelais, which cast the grotesque in social terms, as the expression of the desires of an underclass, Camille carefully negotiated the social function of monsters in Gothic art. Similarly, a number of recent studies have attempted to understand the cultural specificity of making monsters within Romanesque Europe. David Williams argued that monsters were an important feature of an apophatic tradition that began with Pseudo-Dionysus in the fifth century and endured throughout the Middle Ages.[45] T.A. Heslop has seen in the protean rendering of a "chimera" on a crypt capital of Canterbury Cathedral a parallel to the imaginative processes that Anselm and Honorius Augustodunensis believed were necessary to acquire knowledge of the divine.[46] What has begun to emerge from these and other studies is a notion that monsters were imbricated in the ways in which individuals and communities defined themselves.

Herbert Kessler's recent discussion of scenes of Christ and dragons is instructive in this regard in that it identifies a doubleness in representations of monsters and of beasts.[47] Medieval theologians identified a typological precursor for the salvific power of the crucifix in the brazen serpent, a bronze that God commanded Moses to fabricate (Numbers 21: 6–9). Any of the Israelites that were bitten by poisonous snakes merely had to look

[42] Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone, 1998).
[43] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York: Zone Books, 2001).
[44] Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*. See also Otto K. Werckmeister's critique of Meyer Schapiro's interpretation of figures of the jongleurs at Silos: "Jugglers in a Monastery", *Oxford Art Journal* 17 (1994): 60–64.
[45] Williams, *Deformed Discourse*.
[46] T.E. Heslop, "Contemplating Chimera in Medieval Imagination: St Anselm's Crypt at Canterbury", in *Raising the Eyebrow: John Onians and World Art Studies: An Album Amicorum in his Honour*, ed. Lauren Golden (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2001), 153–68.
[47] Herbert Kessler, "Christ the Magic Dragon", *Gesta* 48, no. 2 (2009): 119–34.

on the image of the serpent to be cured. By the twelfth century the brazen serpent came to be represented as a dragon, whose body could incorporate elements of birds, lions, and serpents. A celebrated stained-glass roundel from Abbot Suger's St-Denis features Moses pointing to a dragon and crucifix as the Israelites look on. As Kessler notes, this juxtaposition of the two images atop a column works in two ways. First, its very vividness appealed to "carnal vision", allowing viewers to form pictures that would endure in their memories.[48] Second, the juxtaposition of images served "spiritual seeing", for the layered associations of the various animals comprising the brazen serpent – snake, lion, and caladrius – in bestiaries and other exegetical texts could enrich the meaning of the Crucifix, evoking a host of concepts, from the relationship of the two Testaments, to Christian justification for material images, to the theme of Good's triumph over Evil.

APPROACHING MONSTERS IN THE PRESENT STUDY

If nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars often cast monsters in art as embodying or mitigating the fears that were seen to characterize the Dark Ages, I likewise consider an alternative scenario: in what ways did monsters help medieval audiences envision, perhaps even achieve, various ambitions? My aim is not to replace a dystopic reading of monsters with a utopian narrative. Nor am I interested in using the art to reconstruct or resurrect the past "as it was". Rather, my readings attempt to contribute to the expanding scholarly discourse on the monstrous by suggesting that medieval representations of monsters could sometimes service ideals, including intellectual, political, religious, and social, even as they simultaneously articulated fears. To be sure, every individual experiences works of art differently, but it is my conviction that the physical or formal aspect of monsters profoundly shaped their reception.

In positing rationales for the pervasiveness of monsters in Romanesque sculpture, it could be argued that many medieval churches were literally built with monstrous bodies. The fossilized remains of prehistoric creatures comprise limestone, the most common material used by twelfth-century sculptors in Europe.[49] Shell fragments of marine animals provided most

---

[48] Here Kessler draws substantially on Mary Carruthers's important work of memory.
[49] Annie Blanc and Claude Lorenz, "Observations sur la nature des materiaux de la cathedrale de Notre-Dame de Paris", *Gesta* 29 (1990): 132–38; Lore L. Holmes, Charles T. Little and Edward V. Sayre, "Elemental Characterization of Medieval Limestone Sculpture from Parisian and Burgundian Sources", *Journal of Field Archaeology* 13 (1986): 419–38; Charles T. Little, "Searching for the Provenances of Medieval Stone Sculpture: Possibilities and Limitations", *Gesta* 33 (1994): 129–37. See also the discussion of early modern and pre-modern attitudes to fossils in Simon Winchester, *The Map that Changed the World: William Smith and the Birth of Modern Geology* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001).

FIG. 4. FOSSILIZED
SHELLS IN A PIER
OF NOTRE-DAME,
PARIS

of the calcite, the primary chemical constituting the stone, though crystallized seawater sometimes was a source. Formed in shallow sea-beds, both types of this sedimentary rock contain visible skeletons of fish, imminently recognizable to untrained eyes, and less familiar animals, from the spiraled bodies of ammonites and gastropods to the radiating appendages of brittle stars. Along with its relative light weight, workability, and strength, modern architects prize stone from certain quarries because of varied and highly visible fossilized remains, deemed to add character to the material's surfaces. Indeed, Lutetian limestone from the quarry of St-Maximin, outside Paris, has recently been used in the houses of retired basketball star, Michael Jordan, and Pierre Omidyar, founder of eBay. Stanford University recently purchased rights to a portion of this quarry for future building projects.[50] The quarry of St-Maximin likewise supplied stone for a number of medieval building projects. Even the most cursory inspection of the masonry blocks of Notre-Dame in Paris reveals the presence of a host of varied shell forms, including gastropods and clam-like forms (fig. 4).

How medieval masons and sculptors regarded these fossilized bodies, which they regularly encountered as they worked in stone, cannot be known. Perhaps the decorative shell carved in a pier at the abbey St-Jean-L'Evangeliste at Trizay (fig. 5) was partly inspired by the many shell forms found in limestone. The shallow groove within which this sculptured shell sits visually suggests that the form either emerges from, or is embedded within, the stone; an articulation of this small shell indexes the working methods of the sculptor. Such a formal reading does not exclude the religious importance of the shell as symbol of the celebrated cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Indeed, the resonance of this symbol may partly arise from the ubiquity of the shell form in the masonry of churches along the pilgrimage route.

However tempting it is to imagine medieval artists responding to the intriguing shapes of ancient marine animals lodged within the material of their work, this scenario must likely remain speculative given the

---

50   *The Stanford Daily*, 2 November 2010.

scant knowledge that
we have of sculptors'
working methods. Nor
do we have a record of
how medieval audiences
responded to the many
fossils, so often clearly
visible in the masonry
blocks of churches
and other structures.
Did medieval patrons
deem the presence of
fossilized forms within
limestone as a desirable
aspect of the building

FIG. 5. SHELL
CARVED FROM
MOLDING,
ST-JEAN-
L'EVANGELISTE,
TRIZAY

material? Based on the relatively scant records of medieval responses to
architecture, we cannot answer this question, but, as the sheer number
of twelfth-century examples attest, it is clear that many medieval patrons
valued carvings of fantastic creatures among the building blocks of their
churches.

My approach to these imaginary creatures is partly informed by a
number of recent publications in fields outside of art history, which
conclude that monsters are ambiguous, simultaneously serving as sites of
fear and desire. The philosopher Stephen Asma, for example, identifies in
the writings of Aristotle and the triune monster in Plato's *Republic*, among
other textual sources, evidence for the monstrous within ourselves.[51] For
Asma, monsters ultimately present a terrifying lack of self-control; only
reason can ultimately safeguard morality. Others are more sanguine about
our inner monsters. Jeremy Cohen notes that Jacques Lacan's notion of
"extimité" illuminates the methodological assumptions underlying many
recent approaches to monsters in the fields of history and literature.[52] The
Other that is embodied in monsters can be integral to the construction of
identity, not merely an imaginative foil. In a wide-ranging anthropological
study, David Gilmore regards the monster as a universal symbol, which
fuses contraries and ultimately stands for "our innermost selves".[53] Although
recognizing the positive role that monsters can play in identity formation,

---

[51] Stephen Asma, *On Monsters: An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears* (Oxford:
Oxford University Press, 2009), 39–60.
[52] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis,
MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), xii. Along similar lines, the 1990s witnessed an
interest in Julia Kristeva's notion of the "abject": Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay
on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1–31.
[53] David Gilmore, *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary
Terrors* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 11–22.

however, Asma, Cohen, and Gilmore gravitate toward the more horrifying aspects of these beasts. In other words, the positive or attractive aspect of monsters remains recognized, albeit relatively uncharted territory in the humanities and social sciences.

From the perspective of *Begriffsgeschichte*, such an approach appears as more than the application of a twenty-first-century notion, for it finds support in medieval etymologies. Isidore of Seville observed that "monster" (*monstrum*) derives from the verb *monere*, meaning to warn, while Augustine linked the term with *monstrare*, to show.[54] These two aspects of the origin of the term "monster", which could encompass both positive and negative senses, affords glimpses into the variegated contours of medieval understandings of artistic representations of imaginary beings that are unavailable to the neologism "grotesque", coined after the excavation of Nero's *Domus Aurea* in the 1480s.[55] The bizarre creatures that inhabit these frescos, buried for centuries in the "grottoes" beneath the streets of Rome, immediately inspired and challenged Renaissance artists, for they complicated received notions about aesthetic norms in classical art. We have no such record of such a charged and transformative encounter during the High Middle Ages in Europe. Rather, artists from this period tended to draw heavily on traditions, both medieval and ancient, even as they fashioned monsters with unprecedented morphologies. The authority linked with tradition in medieval culture might have made this pictorial strategy especially attractive to artists and patrons. Even so, Geoffrey Harpham's important point that "grotesque" has no descriptive value, that it is a "concept without form", holds equally for the "monstrous".[56] This designation functions as an *a posteriori* judgment, rather than an attribute of a work of art.

To cite a celebrated example from the twelfth century, discussed in Chapter 2, St Bernard's critiques of excesses in Romanesque sculpture in the cloister applied the term 'monstrous' equally to a wide range of themes, from carvings of centaurs and to scenes of combat between men.[57] His category of the "monstrous" does not appear to signal any perceived formal or morphological commonalities among these diverse themes, but its use vis-à-vis sculptures in the cloister served to advance the monk's

---

54   See, for example, Cohen, *Of Giants*, xiv; Tom Tyler, "Deviants, Donestre, and Debauchees: Here be Monsters", *Culture, Theory & Critique* 49, no. 2 (2008): 113, 120; Lisa Verner, *The Epistemology of the Monstrous in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 2–5.
55   Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *On the Grotesque: Strategies of Contradiction in Art and Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 27–71; Philippe Morel, *Les grotesques* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 44–45.
56   Harpham, *On the Grotesque*, 3. For a discussion of the notion of "monster" in antiquity and the late Middle Ages, see Kappler, *Monstres, demons, et merveilles*, 207–53.
57   See the discussion in Conrad Rudolph, *The 'Things of Greater Importance': Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 125–58.

agenda of ridding monasteries of expensive and distracting artworks. In short, resort to the term "monstrous" often reveals much, if not more, about the position of the interpreter than accounting for a figure within or an aspect of an artwork.

The present study employs "monster" and its cognates to refer exclusively to representations of imaginary creatures and not judgments about, say, the aesthetics or functions of works of art. I am uninterested in positing normative notions of monstrosity or the grotesque in the twelfth century. Rather, I am interested in exploring the field of possibilities that the choice of representing monsters presented to Romanesque artists. It may be that some medieval viewers believed in, say, the existence of dog-headed men in India or large-footed sciopods in Eastern deserts,[58] but in the end these are all products of the imagination. As such, they offer fertile ground for the history of culture and ideas.

Chapters in this volume are ordered in rough chronological order. The first four chapters focus on works produced in twelfth-century France. The remarkable and sustained interest in representations of monsters there, I suggest, had broad social and intellectual significance. One mode of the reception of this tradition is explored in the final chapter, which examines Portuguese sculptors at the turn of the thirteenth century. These artists appear to have looked to Burgundian forms for inspiration, a move that was rooted in the strong familial and institutional ties between the two regions. What is of interest in the context of this volume is that Portuguese artists gravitated toward representations of animals and monsters, often at the complete exclusion of humans. An argument can be made that representations of monsters became "classical" for Portuguese sculptors.

Chapter 1 argues that some monstrous creatures could offer a vision of the practice of a pure faith, unadulterated by the stain of human civilization. The fidelity with which some medieval carvings adhere to monstrous types established in antiquity suggests a way to evoke a desire for this pure faith. Considering another aspect of this revival of antique types, Chapter 2 argues that the bodies of monsters could be read as part of a broader pattern of Romanesque sculptors using quotations of classical statuary, especially the emulation of male nudes. Quite remarkably, just as the heroic males of antiquity could inform representations of Biblical heroes and saints, the bodies of antique monsters could likewise service ideals. In other words, twelfth-century artists had a relatively capacious notion of idealized bodies. The ubiquitous figure of the centaur could act

---

[58]   See, for example, Scott Bruce, "Hagiography as Monstrous Ethnography: A Note on Ratramnus of Corbie's Letter Concerning the Conversion of the Cynocephali", in *Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Michael Herren on his 65th Birthday*, ed. Gernot R. Wieland, Carin Ruff and Ross G. Arthur (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); P. Gravestock, "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?", in *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life, and Literature*, ed. D. Hassig (New York, 1999), 124.

as a screen to service a number of ideals, even the articulation of a notion of beauty inspired by classical art.

The following two chapters can be read as pendants. Taking metaphors of reading that were commonly applied to viewing works of art as its point of departure, Chapter 3 considers how and what monsters might contribute to reading traditional iconographies. A capital from Moutiers-St-Jean that features a double-headed eagle in the scene of the Sacrifice of Cain – a move without precedent in medieval art – draws attention to its own artifice. This representational strategy can be read against the many charges of idolatry often launched by twelfth-century theologians against the artistic medium of sculpture. Chapter 4 considers some of the social functions of creating monstrous forms by focusing on a "griffin" at Vézelay, the specific morphology of which conforms to medieval or ancient types. I read this phenomenon not so much in terms of the expression of the artist, as previous studies of the Romanesque have, but in terms of the social production of meaning. I consider this from two perspectives. First, monsters can serve to negotiate and articulate the boundaries between the sacred and profane realm. Second, I take the widespread interest in poetry writing among monks to consider a poetics of the monstrous.

Chapter 5 considers how the unusual emphasis on mythological animals – to the virtual exclusion of human figures – in churches of northern Portugal was a way of imagining a political and ecclesiastical order of universal significance. A variety of sources, textual and visual, support the claim that it was not so much the interpretive problems posed by monsters that was of interest, but rather images, with roots in Burgundion art, became an important way of imagining a new institutional, even cosmological order. In the end, however, I argue that these monsters cannot be contained by an ideological agenda, but rather embody a creative energy that is common to all the monsters considered in this volume.

Throughout this book I take as axiomatic that the idiosyncratic morphology of many Romanesque monsters warrant sustained inquiries in order to come to deeper understandings of their significance. For this reason, I refrain from painting teratology in broad strokes, favoring instead close readings in strategic case studies that are illuminated by a range of data, both visual and textual. The advantage of this approach is that it allows the complexity of individual articulations of the monstrous to emerge. As a result, the present volume does not pretend to offer anything approximating a comprehensive account of monsters in Romanesque sculpture. I do not believe such a project would be desirable or, if pursued, profitable. Indeed, one of the major contentions of this book is that monsters, as products of the imagination, profit from deep readings that can excavate the cultural resonances of these works. In other words, if making monsters is a widespread exercise in medieval culture, each instance of facture engaged a particular situation. Excavating the richness and complexity of these imaginary creatures stands as a central goal of

the following pages. It is my contention that such sustained readings, which allow objects to give voice to their own theory, and their own set of problems and questions, has the power to transform the broader operative assumptions with respect to our approaches to medieval art.

<div align="right">

1

</div>

PAST PRESENT

The "Unicorn's" utter inscrutability, its utter foreignness makes
it only the more divine.

                    Georges Bataille, *Lascaux or the Birth of Art*

EVOKING PRESENCE

At the turn of the nineteenth century archeologists coined the
neologism "Romanesque" in English and "*roman*" in French to signal
their proposition that medieval architecture revived antique techniques
and vocabulary.[1] Whatever shortcomings might be identified in this term,
its implicit historicism has a certain aptness with respect to many carvings
of monsters that represent longstanding types. The griffin, manticore,
siren, and other fabulous creatures on a pier from Souvigny (fig. 6), for
example, stem from ancient pictorial traditions and are clearly identified
with inscribed names, the same used by Pliny the Elder, Solinus, and other
proto-scientists.[2] Other faces of this damaged and incomplete monolith
feature astrological signs and calendrical scenes that likewise have roots in
classical traditions. It hardly matters whether the designers of this pier had
firsthand knowledge of ancient artistic models, for these established types
offered Romanesque designers authoritative building blocks with which
they could imaginatively construct a cosmology. Unfortunately, the scant
archeological and documentary record associated with this work does
not permit us to reconstruct the original architectural context, though
Neil Stratford has suggested that the pier originally served as the gnomon

---

[1]   Tina Bizzarro, *Romanesque Architectural Criticism: A Pre-History* (New York:
Cambridge University Press, 1992). With respect to this term in sculpture, see Xavier
Barral I Altet, *Contre l'art roman? Essai sur un passé réinventé* (Paris: Fayard, 2006);
Wayne R. Dynes, "Art, Language, Romanesque", *Gesta* 28 (1989): 3–10; Jean Nayrolles,
L'invention de l'art roman à l'époque moderne (XVIIIe–XIXe siècles) (Rennes: Presses
Universitaires de Rennes, 2005).
[2]   Neil Stratford, *Chronos et cosmos: le pilier roman de Souvigny* (Souvigny: Musée de
Souvigny, 2005), 57–73.

of a sundial within a cloister, a setting that would have added further density to the spatio-temporal associations of its carved imagery.[3]

Building on the insights of Harold Bloom, Norman Bryson has identified the creative engagement with tradition as central to the artistic process, that an individual artist must continually articulate insights in terms of established cultural schema.[4] For Bryson, the insight of an artist is always "undone", because once achieved, she must articulate her vision in the terms of a visual language that preceded her. It is unclear, as Bloom and Bryson suggest, that artists' inevitable reliance upon the past was necessarily marked by an anxiety of influence. Medieval artists could embrace acts of appropriation. M.B. Pranger, for one, has noted a marked artifice in many twelfth-century monastic writings, and has argued that this authorial strategy served seemingly contrary desires, namely gaining access to individualized experience by relying heavily upon literary conventions.[5] By inflecting prose with the language of the past, individuals could evoke a dense network of associations that offered a reliable vehicle to access the complexities of lived experience.

This chapter argues that one can identify a similar strategy of adopting antique forms to convey an intensity of religious feeling and ideals in a little-known, albeit masterfully carved, tympanum along the southern wall of St-Paul-de-Varax (fig. 7), which includes a faun rendered with remarkable archeological fidelity.[6] The sculptor's effort to evoke a salient presence and spiritual encounter in this tympanum is immediately signaled in the pared-down composition, which concentrates the viewer's attention on a meeting of a faun and a man, dressed

FIG. 6. PIER FROM
SOUVIGNY

3   Ibid., 75–82.
4   Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Bloom draws on the seminal work of Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
5   M.B. Pranger, *The Artificiality of Christianity: Essays on the Poetics of Monasticism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003). For uses of the past in medieval culture, see also the collected essays in Robert Maxwell, ed., *Representing History, 900–1300: Art, Music, History* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).
6   Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 96.

in tattered clothing and holding a staff. Lushly carved vegetation punctuates the scene and evokes a natural setting for this meeting. The inscription in the surrounding archivolt reads:

> ABBAS QUEREBAT PAULUM FAUNUSQUE DOCEB/A[t]
>
> The abbot sought Paul and the faun showed him [the way][7]

This full leonine hexameter links the carving to St Anthony's encounters with fantastic creatures as he traversed the desert in search for his spiritual mentor, Paul the Hermit.

First related in Jerome's *Vita Pauli*,[8] Anthony's meeting with the faun

---
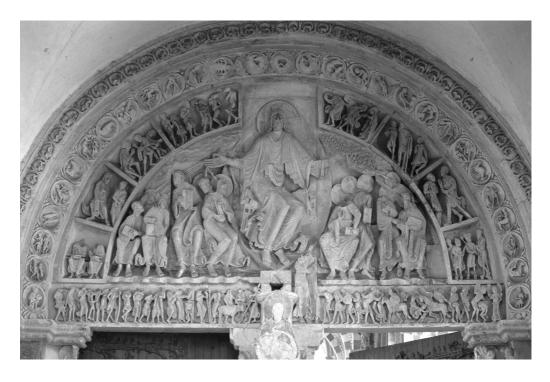
[7]   Translation and transcription based on Calvin B. Kendall, *The Allegory of the Church: Romanesque Portals and their Verse Inscriptions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 273–74. Other discussions of this inscription include Robert Favreu, Jean Michaud and B. Mora, *Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1994), 17: 20; Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux du XIIe siècle en France: Étude sur les origines de l'iconographie du moyen âge* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1924), 240, n.1; idem, *Religious Art in France*, 484, n. 122. The wall of a fifteenth-century chapel overlaps the lower right corner of the tympanum, but the obscured portion does not appear large enough to accommodate an inscription.

[8]   Throughout this chapter I refer to Vincent Hunink's recent edition of Jerome's text: *Vita Pauli* (Leuven: Uitgeverij P., 2002). It is available online: http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/jeromevitapauli.html.

rarely features in medieval art.[9] The Varax sculpture and a stylistically related, though heavily damaged, capital from the nearby church at Perrecy-les-Forges are the earliest surviving examples of this iconography, but they have been little studied.[10] In a paragraph-long discussion of the tympanum, the most probing analysis to date, Mâle characterized the scene as charming and singular.[11] The erudite iconographer concluded rather cryptically that the sculpture reminded viewers that Anthony had witnessed a world that had since vanished.

The inscription surrounding the Varax tympanum offers concrete terms with which to approach this work. Rather than simply anchor the identity of the adjacent figures, a number of words complement the sculpture and add nuances.[12] The identification of Anthony as "abbot" (*abbas*), and not by name,[13] frames the episode with an institutional term of the Church. Absent from medieval versions of the *Vita Pauli*, this nomenclature signals an interpolation by the portal's designer. Additionally, the use of the word *docere*, meaning "teach" or "show", to characterize the interaction between the faun and the "abbot" conveys something akin to a lesson between a teacher and a pupil. While it is true that medieval exegetical traditions

[9] Louis Reau mistakenly argues that a narthex fresco of this scene at Sant'Angelo in Formis that represents this scene dates to the eleventh century: *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien* (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1958), 3: 112. It probably dates to circa 1200, when the narthex was added to the church; Janine Wettstein, *Sant'Angelo in Formis et la peinture médiévale en Campanie* (Geneva: Droz, 1960), 30. A late twelfth-century fresco from Brauweiler features Anthony and the Centaur, another encounter on the saint's quest for Paul; Uwe Bathe, *Der romanische Kapitelsaal in Brauweiler* (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2003), 348–49. For later examples, see Karl Steel, "Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali: Medieval Scholarly Teratology and the Question of the Human", in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, ed. Asa Mitman with Peter J. Dendle (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 257–74.

[10] For a sustained discussion of the Perrecy capital, see M. Darling, "The Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture of Perrecy-les-Forges" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1994), 253–65.

[11] Mâle, *Art religieux*, 239–240; idem, *Twelfth Century*, 241.

[12] On this distinction, see Roland Barthes, "Rhétorique de l'image", *Communications* 4 (1964): 43–44; Alain-Marie Bassy, "Du text à l'illustration: pour une sémiologie des étapes", *Semiotica* 11, no. 4 (1974): 297–306; Michel Rio, "Images and Words", *New Literary History* 11, no. 4 (1974): 505–12.

[13] Two incised lines in the outer archivolt resemble those used to align the text of the inner archivolt and perhaps suggest a second verse was originally intended or painted and now lost. Indeed, the outer register of the archivolt, adjacent the "ABBAS" of the inner register, there is an "A" that has been seen to continue the "DOCEB-" of the inner register; Kendall, *Allegory*, 273–74; Favreau et al., *Corpus*, 17: 20. Yet because twelfth-century masons often abruptly terminated words without regard for scribal conventions, this interpretation is debatable. The scale of the "A" and its prominence make it unlikely that it is a mason's mark, but perhaps this was intended as an abbreviation for "Anthony" or some other word. Combinations of painted and incised inscriptions are relatively common during this period, and I am unaware of such a combination occurring within a single word. A few incised crosses in the outer register might further signal that another verse was located here because similar forms frequently feature between words in medieval inscriptions.

FIG. 8.
PENTECOST,
CENTRAL
TYMPANUM IN
THE NARTHEX,
VÉZELAY

typically cast semi-hominoids as embodiments of vices,[14] the inscription casts the exchange in decidedly positive terms.

The visual prominence of this sculptured faun likewise is idiosyncratic, for semi-hominoids rarely feature in contemporary tympana. Examples include a siren in the corner of a carving at Rio Mau in Portugal (fig. 36), discussed in Chapter 4, and the central portal in the narthex at Vézelay (fig. 8), where men with the heads of dogs, the snouts of pigs, and other Marvels of the East, ultimately drawn from Pliny and other ancient writers, encompass the figures of Christ and the apostles. Differences of interpretation abound within the voluminous scholarship on the latter tympanum, but there exists wide agreement that the work presents an oppositional relationship between the followers of Christ at center and the hominoids around its perimeter.[15] These monstrous races might ultimately benefit from hearing the Word, which Christ disseminates with rays from his hands, but their wild gestures and grimacing faces fail to suggest that they have anything to teach the apostles.

[14]   See, for example, Marcello Angheben, *Les chapiteaux romans de Bourgogne: Thèmes et programmes* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 356; P. Diemer, "Stil und Ikonographie der Kapitelle von Ste.-Madeleine, Vézelay" (PhD dissertation, Ruprecht-Karl-Universität, Heidelberg, 1975), 268–70; Leclercq-Marx, *La sirène*.

[15]   See, for example, Adolph Katzenellenbogen, "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay: Its Encyclopedic Meaning and Its Relation to the First Crusade", *Art Bulletin* 26 (1944): 141–51; Peter Low, "'You Who Were Once Far Off': Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal of Vézelay", *Art Bulletin* 85 (2003): 469–89.

By contrast, the Varax tympanum places at its center an encounter between a saint and a monster and casts the interchange in an unambiguously positive light, suggesting that the saint actually learned something from a nonhuman. Interspecies communication has received much commentary in recent years, including the late writings of Jacques Derrida.[16] Derrida emphasized the sense of shame he felt standing naked before the gaze of his cat, locating in this emotional experience the trace of a Western drive, evident in various mythologies, to assert human dominion over animals. Rejecting the anthropocentrism that underpins this interpretive model, Donna J. Haraway has more recently asked us to consider the "reciprocating complexity" in encounters between species.[17] The following remarks might be construed as a chapter in the ongoing history of dialogic encounters that decenter the human. More than an eccentric curiosity, I argue that Anthony's encounter with the faun offered medieval audiences a way to imagine an unadulterated religiosity, analogous to the authentic faith sought by various Church reform movements during the twelfth century.[18] Because these creatures typically lived outside the corrupting influence of civilization, they could offer medieval viewers a glimpse into what a pure religiosity might look like. I suggest that representations of monsters could sometimes even act as ideals, worthy of admiration by medieval viewers.[19]

A NOTE ON CONTEXT

The Varax tympanum can be dated to the second quarter of the twelfth century based on comparisons with stylistically related sculptures at Anzy-le-Duc, Cluny, and Vézelay, among others. It thus postdates the one twelfth-century written source associated with the church at Varax. On 15 June 1103, Archbishop Hugh of Lyon donated it, along with another at Versailleux, to the chapterhouse of St Paul in his episcopal city.[20] The archbishop required the parish church of Varax to pay an annual tribute of ten gold *sous*, an obligation from which it was released roughly 100 years later by a certain Girard, who held the office of the chamberlain (*chamrier*)

---

[16]   Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

[17]   Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 14.

[18]   See the masterful overview of Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24–25 and passim.

[19]   Similar arguments have been made for the Wild Man in later medieval culture. See, for example, Timothy Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980), 1–18.

[20]   For an overview of sources related to Varax, see Marie-Claude Guigue, *Topographie historique du département de l'Ain* (Bourg-en-Bresse: Gromier, 1873 [rpt Marseille: Lafitte, 1976]), 358–59.

of St-Paul-de-Lyon.[21] Despite its exemption from annual payments, Varax remained under the jurisdiction of the chapterhouse until 1790. Whether the church was commissioned exclusively at the local level or whether the canons in Lyon participated in some way cannot be known.

The specific functions that Varax's south portal originally served remain uncertain, though an excavation could potentially yield insights. Southern sides of churches typically were reserved for a cloister or afforded access to an ecclesiastical residence. If such a disposition originally existed at Varax, the *abbas* in the tympanum's inscription would have complemented the medieval topography of the site more fully than is evident today. Regardless, clerics undoubtedly used this entrance often as it offered more direct access to the sanctuary of the church than the one other portal, located on the west façade. I focus here primarily on how the sculpture addressed the concerns of these churchmen, though many of the themes I will touch upon could have held profound significance for lay viewers as well.

MORAL ANIMALS

Jerome devotes a substantial portion of his *Vita Pauli* to Anthony's traverse of the Egyptian desert in search of the 113-year-old Paul. Emphasis on the priority of the latter saint can be read as an attempt to outdo Athanasius, who, a few years earlier, had written a biography of Anthony that made no mention of this mentor. Perhaps more idiosyncratic than offering the only early account of Paul, Jerome punctuates his account of Anthony's journey with fabulous creatures. The first is a human/horse mixture (*hominem equo mixtum*), which, the author informs us, poets call hippocentaurs. Asked where Paul resides, the hippocentaur attempts to speak to Anthony, but produces only unintelligible utterances. To make his meaning clear the creature resorts to pointing in the direction of the hermitage with his right hand. Jerome then wonders whether the creature truly is a monstrous denizen of the desert or whether the devil took on this monstrous shape to terrify him. Contrasting the author's earlier use of specific nomenclature, the question raised at the end of this episode renders the creature's identity uncertain.

Immediately after leaving the centaur, Anthony encounters a dwarf (*homunculum*), who has a hooked snout, horns, and feet like a goat. The saint first asks the creature to identify himself. The creature responds that he is a mortal being, falsely worshipped by gentiles under the names Faun, Satyr, and Incubus (*Faunos Satyrosque et Incubos*).[22] The animal, to use

---

[21] On this figure, see Jean Beyssac, *Les chanoines de l'église de Lyon* (Lyon: P. Grange, 1914), 50.
[22] On general problems of nomenclature for fauns in medieval sources, see Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, 98.

Jerome's term, then asks Anthony to pray to God on behalf of his kind, which he fails to name. Anthony weeps for joy and exclaims:

> 'Vae tibi, Alexandria, quae pro Deo portenta ueneraris. Vae tibi, ciuitas meretrix, in qua totius orbis daemonia confluxere. Quid nunc dictura es? Bestiae Christum loquuntur, et tu pro Deo portenta ueneraris.'

> 'Woe to you, Alexandria, who instead of God worship idols! Woe to you, harlot city, into which have flowed the demons of the whole world! What will you say now? Beasts speak of Christ, and you instead of God worship idols.'

During this paean, the creature speeds away. At this point in the text, Jerome interrupts his narrative to assert that such creatures exist, for one was brought alive to Alexandria. After it expired, the animal was preserved in salt and sent to the emperor in Antioch.

Anthony then walks for another day, finding traces of other wild animals. At twilight he encounters a she-wolf that leads him to Paul. Initially, Anthony sits outside the hermit's hut, begging to have a meeting. Paul eventually consents by embracing Anthony. The two share a meal of bread, brought by a raven. For sixty years this bird had brought Paul a loaf every day, but miraculously on the day of Anthony's visit the ration was doubled. The two spend the night talking of God and, at dawn, Paul announces that he is about to die and requests that Anthony retrieve a cloak from Bishop Athanasius to wrap his body for the burial. After an initial protest, Anthony consents. Upon his return, lions help the saint dig Paul's grave.

Jerome's introduction of mythological creatures into his narrative might be read as poetic license or an exercise in fantasy, but he likely believed in their existence. Classical authors were divided on this issue. Lucretius considered centaurs to be purely fictional, including them as an illustration of his idiosyncratic discussion of the genesis of imaginary images:

> For certainly no image of a Centaur comes from one living, since there never was a living thing of this nature; but when the images of man and horse meet by accident, they easily adhere at once, as I said before, on account of their fine nature and thin texture.[23]

Pliny voiced an opposing view, claiming that he personally saw a centaur, preserved in honey, from Egypt, that the Emperor Claudius had transported to Rome.[24] Other ancient authors, including Phelegon of Tralles and

---

[23]   Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, ed. and trans. W.H.D. Rouse, revised by Martin Ferguson Smith, LCL 181 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 4: 739–74.
[24]   Pliny, *Natural History, Books 3–7*, ed. and trans. H. Rackham, LCL 352 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 572 (7.32).

Plutarch, similarly affirmed the existence of centaurs.[25] Jerome's aside in the *Vita Pauli*, noting the existence that a satyr was preserved in Antioch, has obvious parallels to Pliny, but this does not necessarily signal that the Church father is being disingenuous. In various commentaries on the Old Testament, the church father identifies satyrs within the Hebrew texts without any trace of irony.[26]

Scholars of Jerome long considered his attention to desert creatures in the *Vita Pauli* to be at best an imaginative mixture of poetry and biography,[27] or at worst a bizarre digression.[28] More recent analyses have sought to understand the author's motivations for describing these encounters at length. Drawing upon the work of W.J.T. Mitchell and Hayden White, Patricia Cox Miller argues that the creatures of the desert serve as "hyper-icons", simultaneously signifying both an unbridled, sexualized wildness and a wisdom uncorrupted by civilization.[29] These poles resemble the paradoxical roles that deserts played in many early hagiographies: a place of temptation, often sexual, that alternatively could purify the sinner. Paul B. Harvey considers Jerome's authorial strategy in light of a claim in his *Epistles* (1.10.3) that he intended the *Vita Pauli* to appeal to the unlettered.[30] Harvey reads this statement against the backdrop of anxiety over the enduring widespread appeal of the classics. Jerome, he argues, forged a new genre, one that incorporated the exoticism of some pagan literature while simultaneously offering Christian moral guidance.

Harvey concludes that in offering a vision of unadulterated Christianity the centaur and satyr of the *Vita Pauli* resemble the figure of the Noble

---

[25] Adrienne Mayor, *The First Fossil Hunters: Paleontology in Greek and Roman Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 228–53. See also Trevor Murphy, *Pliny the Elder's* Natural History: *The Empire in the Encyclopedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 198.

[26] Harvey, P.B. "Saints and Satyrs: Jerome the Scholar at Work", *Athenaeum* 86 (1998): 35–56, at 44–49. A similar utopianism has been identified in late medieval Alexander literature; Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 163–77.

[27] See, for example, E. Coleiro, "St. Jerome's Lives of the Hermits", *Vigilae Christianae* 11 (1957): 167, 172; Herbert Kech, *Hagiographie als christliche Unterhaltungsliteratur: Studien zum Phänomen des Erbaulichen anhand der Mönchsviten des hl. Hieronymus* (Göppingen: A. Kümmerle, 1977), 24.

[28] See, for example, Antoine de Vogüé, "La 'Vita Pauli' de saint Jérôme et sa datation: Examen d'un passage-clé (ch. 6)", in *Eulogia: Mélanges offerts à A.R. Bastiaensen à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire*, ed. Gerhardus Johannes Marius Bartelink et al. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1991), 169; Philip Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 134.

[29] Patricia Cox Miller, "Jerome's Centaur: A Hyper-Icon of the Desert", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1996): 209–33. Miller's reading makes use of W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Hayden White, "The Forms of Wildness: The Archaeology of an Idea", in *The Wild Man Within: Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972), 3–38.

[30] Harvey, "Saints and Satyrs". See also Susan Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 34.

Savage in early modern writings on the New World. The analogy only holds so far, for unlike early modern authors, who often stress the physical beauty of denizens of the new world,[31] medieval authors tend to focus on the animal aspects of mixed creatures in painstaking detail. This attention does not necessarily signal, however, that these creatures were deemed to be inferior to humans. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, widely read during the Middle Ages, centaurs were first referred to as half human, rather than half animal (*semihomines Centauros*),[32] perhaps evidence for sympathetic views. Some medieval theologians believed that half-men participated in salvation history, a view influentially articulated in the sixteenth book of Augustine's *City of God*. Indeed, the inscription at Varax has been interpreted as evincing the belief that non-humans could confess Christ and know truth.[33] Nonetheless, some twelfth-century writers took something closer to an antiquarian interest in fauns, including Bernard Sylvester. His cosmological treatise, *De mundi universitate*, identifies Pan, Fauns, and Nereids as "harmless" creatures from long ago.[34]

Such texts signal the possibility of medieval responses to the Varax faun outside a strictly moralizing framework,[35] but textual reprises of the *Vita Pauli* invariably frame the encounter in moral terms. A versified version by Nigel of Canterbury, who was active in the middle decades of the twelfth century, identifies the faun explicitly as a Christian.[36] This poem dwells upon the animal side of the creature, using terms like beast (*belua*) and hobgoblin (*larua*), and fixes upon the creature's ugly features:

> Quodque dat humane decor huic et gratia forme,
> Quedam deformant decus excedencia norme.
> Est facies hominis, sed cornibus aspera binis;
> Frons est apta minis, armis munita ferinis.
> Nasus aduncus ei, frons torua, pedes caprearum,

---

[31] Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 86.

[32] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. and trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G.P. Goold, LCL 42–42 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977–1984), 12.527.

[33] D. Lecoq, "La Mappemonde du Liber Floridus ou La Vision du Monde de Lambert de Saint-Omer", *Imago Mundi* 39 (1987): 25.

[34] "Illic Silvani, Panes et Nerei innocua conversatione aetatis evolvunt tempora longioris", in Bernard Sylvester, *De mundi universitate*, ed. S. Barach and J. Wrobel (Innsbruck, 1867 [rpt Frankfurt, 1964]), 50 (2.7, ll. 113–15). For a discussion of antiquarian attitudes toward mixed creatures, see Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, 85–120.

[35] See Darling, "Perrecy-les-Forges", 254; Mâle, *Art religieux*, 239–40; idem, *Twelfth Century*, 241.

[36] The most reliable edition of the text is L.M. Kaiser, "A Critical Edition of Nigel Wireker's *Vita Sancti Pauli Primi Eremitae*", *Classical Folia* 14 (1960): 63–81. The poem survives in a single manuscript (London: British Library Cotton Vespasian D. XIX, fols 45v–51r). Although various versions of the *Navigatio sancti Brendani abbatis* incorporate elements from the *Vita Pauli*, none include similar encounters with animal/human mixtures; Clara Strijbosch, *The Seafaring Saint: Sources and Analogues of the Twelfth-century* Voyage of Saint Brendan, trans. Thea Summerfeld (Dublin: Four Courts, 2000), 145–46.

Que tria deformem reddunt similemque ferarum.
Conueniunt in eo species rerum uariarum.
Nec sibi conueniunt nec enim decor ullus earum.
Absque sui specie, species simul esse uidentur,
Cum mixte forme formosum nil operentur.

Whatever beauty and grace of human form given him,
Deviations from the norm deformed.
He has the face of a man, but with two rough horns;
His forehead juts out, armed with feral appendages.
His nose is hooked, forehead swollen, and he has the feet of a goat,
These three features deform him and resemble those of an animal.
Various features combine in his appearance.
But not one of these contributes anything of beauty.
Lacking a single appearance, many appearances coexist,
In this mixed form nothing of beauty exists.[37]

The multiple plays on the root *form-* formally resemble Bernard of Clairvaux's celebrated invective against the "deformed beauty and beautiful deformity" (*deformis formositas ac formosa deformitas*) discussed in the next chapter.[38] In the case of Nigel's poem, the mutability of the language foregrounds that the creature is a mixture that is impossible to name. The refusal to specify the identity of the creature is striking when viewed against the abbreviated thirteenth-century account of Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, in which the creature unequivocally identifies himself as a satyr.[39] The conflict between thing (*res*) and its linguistic referent (*nomen* or *verbum*) has been identified as a recurrent theme in Nigel's writing.[40] Whatever uncertainties surround the creature's identity in his poem, the faith of the creature cannot be questioned as it directly asserts that Christ has dominion over all things. Nigel's concentration on the ugly and bestial aspects of the creature renders the profundity of this faith all the more astonishing and memorable.[41]

The piety of the creatures of Jerome's and Nigel's deserts contrasts the moral ambiguity found in a thirteenth-century synopsis of the *Vita Pauli*, part of the prologue to the third book of Thomas of Cantimpré's *De*

---

[37] Kaiser, "Nigel Wireker", ll. 299–308 (my translation).
[38] On this text, see Thomas E.A. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa: A Response to St. Bernard", *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 402–36; Meyer Schapiro, "On the Aesthetic Attitude in Romanesque Art", rpt in Schapiro, *Romanesque Art*, 8–10.
[39] "Respondit se esse Satyrum", in Jacobi de Voragine, *Legenda aurea vulgo historia lombarda dicta*, 2nd edn, ed. Johann Georg Theodor Graesse (Osnabrük: O. Zeller, 1950), 95. An English translation is available: Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1: 85.
[40] Nigel of Canterbury, *The Passion of St. Lawrence, Epigrams and Marginal Poems*, ed. and trans. J. Ziolkowski (New York: Garland, 1994), 207.
[41] Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 122–55.

natura rerum.[42] Thomas casts the hippocentaur as an allegory of adultery, but suspends his negative hermeneutics when he identifies the faun as a follower of Paul (*accolis heremi*). The author argues that this creature demonstrated reason (*rationale*), a faculty that arises from the creature's humanity, for animals lack an *anima*.

Some medieval residents of the Dombes, the region surrounding Varax, believed that animals participated in salvation history. In a celebrated study of a passage in the thirteenth-century *exempla* of Stephen of Bourbon, Jean-Claude Schmitt traced the rise of the cult of the dog saint, Guinefort, martyred by his owner, who incorrectly believed the animal had killed his son.[43] Only later in the story does the owner learn that the greyhound had protected the boy from an attack by a wild beast. During the twelfth century there was widespread belief that sick children could be cured by the bones of this courageous and righteous animal, housed in a well in the woods near Sandrans, less than twenty kilometers from Varax. According to Schmitt, sometime around 1100 Cluniac monks introduced to the Dombes the name "Guinefort", a human saint buried in Pavia; the name was then grafted onto an existing cult. Central to Schmitt's account is the differentiation between lay and ecclesiastical cultures, a distinction that has come to be characterized as much more labile in the wake of Peter Brown's work on the Early Christian cult of saints.[44] The faint traces that remain of Guinefort's cult evince the uncanonical belief, perhaps even held by some clerics in the region, that animals could act morally.

LEARNING FROM MONSTERS

The sculptor of the Varax tympanum stressed the savagery of both the setting and the faun. The lush vegetal tendrils have parallels in the decorative vocabulary of the region, but in this narrative context signal a wild setting. Out of place in the deserts that were so vividly evoked in Jerome's text and the lives of Eastern Saints, these foliate forms conform to a wider pattern of substituting forests for deserts that is observable in twelfth-century writings.[45] Forests were home to monsters, provided

---

[42]   John Bloch Friedman, "Thomas of Cantimpré De Naturis rerum Prologue, Book III, and Book XIX", in *La science de la nature: theories et pratiques*, Cahiers d'Études Médiévales 2 (Montreal: Bellarmin, 1974), 123–24. See also Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 127–30; A. Hilka, "Eine altfranzösiche moralisierende Bearbeitung des Liber de Monstruosis Hominbus Orientis aus Thomas von Catimpré, De Naturis Rerum", *Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen: Philologisch-Historische Klasse* 7 (1933): 1–73.

[43]   Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Martin Thorn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[44]   Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 21–22.

[45]   Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 47–59.

hideouts for thieves, and a refuge or place of trial for saintly hermits. These uninhabited spaces stood apart from the increasingly regulated spaces of cities.[46] It was the corruption of the earthly city in the Augustinian sense that drove Anthony to the solitude of the desert, which offered the possibility of redemption.

The carved faun incorporates animal features, in keeping with ancient Roman representations, as well as established elements from Burgundian Romanesque sculpture to signal his wildness.[47] Unlike several textual versions of the *Vita Pauli*, in which uncertainties of naming feature prominently, the Varax inscription unequivocally identifies the mixed figure as a faun, a creature widely associated with lasciviousness.[48] The belt comprised tufts of hair that encompasses his torso, obscuring the precise point of transition from man to animal, resembles that of a centaur on a nave capital at Vézelay (fig. 15). The Varax faun's expansive gestures abound on carvings of demons and fantastic creatures throughout the region. Typically these seem visual analogues to the medieval notion of *gesticulatio*, excessive gestures that signal wildness or moral turpitude.[49] Only the creature's index finger, which presumably points the way to Paul, links directly with the textual narrative. The gesture does not feature in the text, but perhaps telescopes the earlier encounter with the centaur, which resorted to hand signals to communicate with Anthony. Or, it simply represents an expedient way to convey the content of their conversation. Regardless, the disposition of the faun's members contrasts the rather contained figure of Anthony to suggest his savagery.

The pronounced stitch marks on the carved garments of Anthony evoke the ragged clothing of the prototypical hermit, John the Baptist. The shabbiness of Anthony's garments further aligns with the poverty that Benedict had advocated as essential in the pursuit of the monastic life in chapter 33 of his Rule. Twelfth-century reforming orders, including the Cistercians, avoided ostentation in dress, a practice expressed visually in a

---

[46] See the classic articulation of Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Urizen Books, 1978 [1939]).

[47] On the emphasis on bestial aspects in Romanesque sculptures of animals, see Schapiro, *Romanesque Architectural Sculpture*.

[48] It would have been impractical to signal the ambiguity of the creature in such a brief carved verse, and the bisyllabic "faunus" is more readily incorporated into the strict metrical demands of the leonine hexameter than, say, "incubus". Some Romanesque inscriptions inaccurately identify mythological creatures, a phenomenon that has been interpreted as manner of signaling a general category of monstrosity; Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx, "Les oeuvres romanes accompagnées d'une inscription: Le cas particulier des monstres", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 40 (1997): 91–102. Yet if artists desired to gesture toward a universal, in the medieval sense of the term, why not use a term such as *monstrum*?

[49] Jean-Claude Schmitt, "Gestus/Gesticulatio. Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire medieval des gestes", in *La lexicographie du latin medieval et ses rapports avec les recherches actuelles sur la civilization du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1981), 377–90.

celebrated copy of Gregory's *Moralia in Job* made in 1111 at the scriptorium of Cîteaux.[50] Threadbare habits feature among this manuscript's historiated initials to highlight the virtuous poverty of Cistercian monks.

If various aspects of the tympanum allude to a realm beyond human civilization, the inscription's use of the verb *docebat* implies a decidedly social contract, for teaching requires at least two participants, one of whom imparts knowledge to the other. Similarly, Athanasius portrayed Anthony as pulled in two directions of sanctity, seeking an eremitic life and ministering to monks and laypeople.[51] In the tradition of the *abba*, or "old man", the saint instructed young men how to face temptations in the pursuit of the spiritual life.[52] The epithet appears in Western texts at an early date. At several points Cassian refers to "Abbot Anthony" (*abbas Antonius*), a title by which the saint came to be widely known in the West.[53] By the twelfth century Anthony was regarded as a paragon of the monastic virtues by thinkers as diverse as Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter Damian, and Peter the Venerable, among others.[54] Jean Leclercq, the great historian of monasticism, described this "father of Monks" as a "living text, a means of formation of monastic life" that had application within all Orders.[55] Bynum has demonstrated that the impulse to teach by word and by example became increasingly important within religious houses over the course of the twelfth century.[56] Accompanying this trend was an increased stress on the abbot as an authority figure, who was to be emulated by all members of the community.[57] Remarkably, the Varax inscription radically inverts the pedagogical hierarchy implicit in the title of abbot.[58] Rather than teach subordinates, the "abbot" receives his knowledge from a savage creature.

---

[50]   Dijon, Bibliothèque municipale MS 169.

[51]   Louis Bouyer, *La vie de Saint Antoine* (Abbaye Saint Wandrille: Editions de Fontenelle, 1950), 59–68; Graham Gould, *The Desert Fathers on Monastic Community* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 155–56.

[52]   Gould, *Monastic Community*, 36–37; Benedicta Ward, trans., *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks* (New York: Penguin, 2003), xii–xiii.

[53]   Jean Cassian, *Conférences*, ed. and trans. Eugène Pichery, Sources Chrétiennes 54 (Paris: du Cerf, 1958) 2: 26 (8, 19); 3: 16 (18, 5). See John Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum*, ed. Michael Petschenig and Gottfried Kreuz (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaft, 2004), 78.

[54]   Jean Leclercq, "Saint Antoine dans la tradition monastique médiévale", *Studia Anselmiana* 38 (1956): 229–47. In addition, Anthony was the object of a cult at the priory of La Motte-Saint-Didier in Vienne, just south of Varax, after his relics were translated there in 1095; Gandulf Korte, *Antonius der Einsiedler in Kult, Kunst und Brauchtum Westfalens* (Werl: D. Coelde, 1952), 9; Maillet-Guy, "Les commanderies de l'Ordre de Saint-Antoine en Dauphiné", *Revue de Mabillon* 16 (1926): 1, 173, 289.

[55]   Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), 98–99.

[56]   Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere verbo et exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979).

[57]   Ibid., 192.

[58]   Poetical considerations may have played a role in substituting "abbas" for the

A number of classical texts linked fauns with learning. Ancient philologists argued that "Faunus" was derived from either *favere*, meaning to have favor,[59] or from *fari*, through his association with prophets.[60] In the third book of Ovid's *Fasti*, Numa compels Faunus, who is described as a horned divinity native to Italy, to teach her how to expiate the wrath of Zeus.[61] In his *Silvae*, Statius, who was widely read in the twelfth century, even playfully invokes fauns for inspiration, subverting the broadly held view that fauns were simply lascivious.[62]

A central goal of monastic reading and meditation was to transform the sinful self more fully into the likeness of God.[63] The virtuous lives of saints commonly offered inspiration for this process of reform, whether at the personal or institutional level. Among the many reforming movements of the twelfth century differences of opinion existed as to what specific practices needed to be transformed within the Church, but there was little disagreement on the models.[64] Foremost was the example of the apostles, who were imagined to be the founders of the monastic profession. The many sculptures of apostles adorning cloisters have been interpreted as palpable exhortations to pursue a virtuous communal life.[65] Anthony, as has been noted, similarly was considered by medieval thinkers to be a pivotal and exemplary figure in the history of monasticism. Regarding this saint's carved figure in the Varax tympanum in paraenetic terms,[66]

polysyllabic "Antonius" and its various grammatical inflections, but they do not rob the term of its significance.

[59] "quidam Faunos putant dictos ab eo quod frugibus faueant", Servius the Grammarian, *In Vergilii carmina comentarii*, ed. Georgius Thilo and Hermannus Hagen (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1881), 1. 10. I am thankful for Carole Newlands for sharing her research on the classical etymology of fauns.

[60] "Fauni dei Latinorum, ita ut et Faunus et Fauna sit; hos versibus quos vocant Satrunio in silvestribus locis traditum est solitos fari quo fando Faunos dictos", Varro, *On the Latin Language*, ed. and trans. Roland G. Kent (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 302–4 (7.36).

[61] Ovid, *Fasti*, ed. and trans. James George Frazer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 140–41 (3.291).

[62] "Quid Phoebum tam parva rogem? vos dicite causas, Naides, et faciles, satis est, date carmina Fauni", Statius, *Silvae*, ed. and trans. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL 206 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 136 (2.3.6–7). See comments in Statius, *Silvae: Book 2*, ed. Carole E. Newlands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 161.

[63] Leclercq, *Love of Learning*.

[64] Constable, *Reformation* (with bibliography).

[65] Ilene Forsyth, "The 'Vita Apostolica' and Romanesque Sculpture: Some Preliminary Observations", *Gesta* 25 (1986): 75–82; Kathryn Horste, *Cloister Design and Monastic Reform in Toulouse: The Romanesque Sculpture of La Daurade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 1–8 and passim; Léon Pressouyre, "St. Bernard to St. Francis: Monastic Ideals and Iconographic Programs in the Cloister", *Gesta* 12 (1973): 71–92; Jean Wirth, *L'image à l'époque romane* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1999), 259–327.

[66] On this notion, see, for example, Cynthia Hahn, *Portrayed on the Heart: Narrative Effect in Pictorial Lives of Saints from the Tenth through the Thirteenth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001); Marcia Kupfer, *The Art of Healing: Painting for the Sick and the Sinner in a Medieval Town* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State

his relationship with the faun is striking, for mixed creatures often were associated with heretics and sinners in medieval discourse.[67] After the rise of the mendicant orders in the region of the Dombes at the turn of the thirteenth century, inquisitors even used the term "faun" (*faunus*) to condemn the heretical Waldensians.[68] Dehumanizing enemies of the Church provided a powerful weapon in doctrinal debates and could, in some cases, justify violence in the real world, from crusaders slaughtering Arabs to the pogroms against Jews. But the Varax faun does not appear to function as a rhetorical foil in the tympanum, offering a counterpoint to the virtuous example of Anthony. Rather, the creature has something to teach.[69] This signals a mode of self-definition or transformation that does not distance or marginalize what is perceived as Other. The faun, described in some texts as more virtuous than men, seemingly violates the world order established by God, who gave Adam dominion over all animals. While the fear of slipping into bestiality has been seen to inform twelfth-century representations of semi-humans, such as in Chrétien de Troyes's *Chevalier au lion*,[70] the Varax tympanum signals a contrary desire, to admire, or even emulate, the faith of those who are not fully human.

This attitude of tolerance and openness anticipates later medieval attitudes toward the Wildman. While human beings outside of the civilizing process fascinated medieval audiences, especially in the figure of Nebuchadrezzar cast out among the beasts, this figure was often associated with evidence of man's sinful nature. It was only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the Wildman was widely seen as likewise inhabiting an advantageous position, outside the corrupting influences of civilization.[71] By contrast the Varax faun lacks much of the ambivalence of the figure of the late medieval Wildman. While the faun shares much with Wildman iconography formulated in the twelfth century, especially his hirsute appearance, the figure is cast in a generally more positive light.

Perhaps in this regard, the spirit of this sculpture shares more with early biographies of St Francis, which cast his preaching to the animals as evidence of his humility, distinct from the malice that characterized fallen

University Press, 2003), 1–2; Éric Palazzo, "Les pratiques liturgiques et devotionnelles et le décor monumental dans les églises du Moyen Âge", in *L'emplacement et la function des images dans la peinture murale du Moyen Âge* (Saint-Savin: Centre international d'art mural, 1992), 45–56.

67   See, for example, E. Mitre Fernández, "Animales, vicios y herejías (sobre la criminalización de la disidencia en el Medievo)", *Cuadernos de historia de España* 74 (1994): 255–83; Strickland, *Making Monsters*, 59 and passim.

68   Schmitt, *Holy Greyhound*, 19.

69   See the comments of Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity*, 72–73.

70   See, for example, J. Ribard, "L'enigme Calogrenant", in *Por le soie amisté. Essays in Honor of Norris J. Lacy*, ed. Keith Busby and Catherine M. Jones (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 429.

71   Husband, *Wild Man*, 1–18.

humanity.[72] This act further signaled that the saint appreciated all of God's creation, an outlook that aligns with aspects of Augustinian theology.

SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTERS

The importance of encountering another self in the advancement of the spiritual life extends to another aspect of the tympanum, the figural absence of Paul. This aspect is unusual, for twelfth-century authors often mentioned Anthony and Paul the Hermit in the same breath as manifesting exemplary behavior for monks. Ivo of Chartres praised the simplicity of their lives, Peter of Blois regarded them as models of hospitality, and Peter Damian admired the lack of legalism in their faith.[73] Twelfth-century artists frequently paired the saints as well. Most often the two hermits share a meal, as in sculptures at Duravel and Vézelay.[74] The younger saint buries the corpse of his mentor, with the help of lions, in carvings at Vézelay and St-Hilaire-de-Melle. In fact, I am unaware of a sculpture in France predating the Varax tympanum that unquestionably features Anthony without Paul.[75]

The tradition of coupling these two saints might help explain the inclusion of the figure of Paul on a capital of Anthony's journey at Perrecy-les-Forges.[76] On the left side of the capital a bearded man wearing a long tunic and holding a staff walks toward a heavily damaged figure, of which the left leg and a pair of goat's feet are basically all that remain. In addition,

[72]   Michael Robson, *St. Francis of Assisi: The Legend and the Life* (London: G. Chapman, 1999), 244. See also Edward Allworthy Armstrong, *Saint Francis: Nature Mystic; The Derivation and Significance of Nature Stories in the Franciscan Legend* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973); Roger Sorrell, *Saint Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[73]   Ivo of Chartres, *Decreti* 7 (PL 161, 543); Peter of Blois, *Epistola* 29 (PL 207, 99); Peter Damian, *Invectio in episcopum monachos ad saeculum revocantem* 8 (PL 145, 377).

[74]   On earlier examples of this iconography, see Paul Meyvaert, "A New Perspective on the Ruthwell Cross: *Ecclesia* and *Vita Monastica*", in *The Ruthwell Cross: Papers from the Colloquium Sponsored by the Index of Christian Art, Princeton University, 8 December 1989*, ed. Brendan Cassidy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 133; D.P. Noordeloos, "De Ikonographie van het Bezoek van Antonius den Groote aan Paulus van Thebe", *Het Gildeboek* 25 (1941): 33–74; E. Ó Carragáin, "The Meeting of St. Paul and St. Anthony: Visual and Literary Uses of a Eucharistic Motif", in *Keimelia: Studies in Medieval Archaeology and History in Memory of Tom Delaney*, ed. G. Mac Niocaill and P.F. Wallace (Galway: Galway University Press, 1988), 1–72.

[75]   Two capitals from Vézelay have been identified as scenes from Athanasius's *Vita Antonii*. For the problems associated with these identifications, see Kirk Ambrose, "The Fall of Simon Magus on a Capital at Vézelay", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* ser. 6, 137 (2001): 151; idem, *The Nave Sculpture of Vézelay: The Art of Monastic Viewing* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2006), 105–06. See also C.D. Cuttler, "The Temptations of Saint Anthony in Art from Earliest Times to the First Quarter of the XVI Century" (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1952).

[76]   The later narthex frescos of Sant'Angelo in Formis similarly combine the scenes of Anthony and the Faun and the saint's arrival at the hermitage of Paul; see note 9 above.

a portion of a forearm and hand point to the right. Here, another bearded man wears a hooded cloak and holds a book. The presence of the latter figure, undoubtedly Paul, lends clarity to this narrative by portending the imminent meeting of the two saints, but it fails to capture Anthony's suspended desire to reach his mentor that features so prominently in the *Vita Pauli*.

Hagiographic biographies typically focus on the events of an individual life, but the narrative climax of the *Vita Pauli* lies in the meeting of two saints, a narrative structure that resembles that of the genre of romance. Indeed, defining appropriate relationships stands as a central concern of Jerome's text. The opening passages briefly relate a story in which a lustful woman ties an anonymous and handsome male saint to a bed. As she begins to force herself on him, the man preserves his chastity by biting off his tongue and spitting it into the disgusted woman's face. As a counterpoint to this anecdote, Anthony's search for his spiritual mentor stands as the focus of the text, perhaps marking the sublimation of an erotic relationship.[77]

The figural absence of Paul in the Varax tympanum evokes this desire, for his presence is marked only textually. A chiasmus results between the named and unnamed saints in the inscription versus what figures are rendered or absent in the sculpture. Pranger identifies an irreconcilable paradox of absence and presence as central to the reading and meditation practices of eleventh- and twelfth-century monks:

> On hearing the words, whether sweet or harsh, the monastic soul becomes inevitably drawn into a reading game in which it recognizes those external words to be part of a memory shared by the text (author) and reader alike, a memory that is ever remote and ever close.[78]

The ruminations at the heart of monastic life can be characterized by a movement between two histories, outward toward the historical past that is only accessible through texts and inward toward the particular memories of the individual. The Varax portal points to the impossibility of resolving these two contrary motions: an inscription metamorphoses the carved Anthony into an abbot, a figure familiar to contemporary viewers, while the inscribed Paul figures nowhere in the sculpture.

---

[77]   D. Robertson, *The Medieval Saints' Lives: Spiritual Renewal and Old French Literature* (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1995), 87–94. See also the comments of Virginia Burns, *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 24–33.

[78]   Pranger, *Artificiality of Christianity*, 11. Others previously pointed out that personal inflections were central to monastic reading, including Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*; Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's* Diadscalicon (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Leclercq, *Desire for God*.

Discoordinations between text and image in the tympanum highlight that while these early saints might offer exemplary models of the holy life, their example could only be accessed through representations, whether textual or visual. In this way, one might argue that the tympanum is a self-aware image, laying bare the mechanisms of its own making and ultimately pointing to the limits of its modes of representation.[79] Within the visual economy of the sculpture, however, Paul's figural absence indicates to the viewer that Anthony is in the midst of his journey toward his spiritual mentor. The inscribed "Paul" promises an imminent spiritual encounter, a moment of anticipation that is fitting to render above the entrance to a church.

Metaphors of journeys and pilgrimages had currency among contemporary monastic writers to describe the course of their lives, culminating in the union with God.[80] It is against the horizon of this topos that we can understand statements, including Hugh of St Victor's pithy observation that "all the world is a foreign soil to those whose native land should be heaven".[81]

Notions of pilgrimage informed the rendering of the Varax Anthony. In addition to the selected narrative moment being one of a journey, the saint holds a staff that resembles those used by spiritual pilgrims. Similarly, the savage figure of the faun conveys an exotic setting, perhaps even one that is foreboding. The obvious care given to the articulation of his exotic body palpably evokes a foreign presence. However, the faun's prominent and subtly articulated body does not seem to serve solely as a vehicle of repulsion or spark something akin to mere curiosity, but rather articulates a wildness that stands outside of the corrupting influences of civilization. Despite or perhaps because of disruptions of the familiar, St Anthony advances in his pursuit of the spiritual life. As the inscription succinctly informs us, this monster has something to teach a saint.

[79]   Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, trans. A.-M. Glasheen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[80]   See, for example, Giles Constable, "Opposition to Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages", *Studia Gratiana* 19 (1976): 123–46; idem, "Monachisme et pèlerinage au Moyen Âge", *Revue historique* 258 (1977): 3–27; Philip Edwards, *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11–14.
[81]   Hugh of St Victor, *In Ecclesiasten homiliae* (PL 175, 221); cited and translated in Jerome Taylor, *The* Diadascalicon *of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 216, n.84.

2 IDEAL BODIES

Aimer une femme passe encore; mais une statue, quelle sottise!
Gustave Flaubert, *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*

THE "EXTRAORDINARY FORTUNE" OF CENTAURS

Johann Joachim Winckelmann eloquently described ancient sculptures, especially male nudes, in terms of what he considered to be Greek ideals.[1] In the wake of this foundational argument, it has became something of a commonplace to identify in the heroic male nudes of Donatello, Michelangelo, and other early modern sculptors who were inspired by antique prototypes evidence for a humanistic turn in European civilization. Within the economy of this historical model the art of the Middle Ages typically serves as a way station between the cultural heights of antiquity and the Renaissance. In his magisterial study on the nude in Western art, Kenneth Clark argued that that medieval Christian asceticism "eradicated" the image of bodily beauty, with nudes typically associated with humiliation and torture.[2] Accordingly, far from visualizing the best of human aspirations, the unclothed body in medieval art manifested the shame that was a consequence of the Fall of Man.

Recent research on the nude in art has reconsidered the assumptions underpinning this historical model. Creighton Gilbert, for one, questions the longstanding identification of the "Hercules" figure on Nicola Pisano's thirteenth-century pulpit in the Pisa baptistery, persuasively arguing that

[1]   Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 145–81. On Winckelmann's influence on art history more generally, see also Alex Potts's introduction to Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, trans. H.F. Mallgrave (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2006), 1–53.
[2]   Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), 399–446.

this figure is more appropriately identified as Judah.[3] Whereas Vasari's model of cultural rebirth largely informed previous interpretations of this nude figure to be an antique hero, Gilbert argues that theological concerns largely informed Nicola Pisano's design of this figure, perhaps even superseding a desire for the revival of Classical sensibilities or the advancement of a proto-humanist agenda. Nor were all medieval nudes necessarily read through a strict moralizing lens. Sherry Lindquist points out that nudes in medieval art serviced a complex and nuanced set of needs.[4] Representations of unclothed bodies could function as much more than vehicles for negative moralizing, for they could likewise serve to highlight various ideals, among others, sanctity and the beauty of creation.

In this chapter, I aim to expand upon the emergent discourse on medieval nudes by considering the case of monstrous bodies. In addition to typically being represented without clothing, images of monsters often relied upon the authority of antique models, whether directly or indirectly, in the articulation of their forms. As noted in Chapter 1, the body of the Varax faun has an archeological aspect in its fidelity to this antique type. This creature's very alterity, visually signaled by, among others, his nudity, offered medieval viewers a vision of faith uncorrupted by civilization. In other words, the sculptor transumed this classically inspired body to articulate a Christian message of salvation.[5] Because this scene of Anthony and the Faun is idiosyncratic in the corpus of Romanesque sculpture it might be argued that it yields little insight into the broader cultural concerns. For this reason the present chapter focuses on the ubiquitous figure of the centaur, carvings of which decorate hundreds of churches across Europe. In recognition of this ubiquity Jean Adhémar referred to the "extraordinary fortune" (*fortun extraordinaire*) of the centaur in twelfth-century sculpture in his study of the revival of antique types in medieval art.[6] Perhaps the most salient documentary evidence for a similar

---

[3]   Creighton Gilbert, "The Pisa Baptistery Pulpit Addresses Its Public", *Artibus et historiae* 21 (2000): 26–27.

[4]   Sherry Lindquist, ed., *Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 1–34. For a discussion specific to Romanesque sculpture, see also Thomas E.A. Dale, "The Nude at Moissac: Vision, Phantasia, and the Experience of Romanesque Sculpture", in *Current Directions in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Sculpture Studies*, ed. Robert Maxwell and Kirk Ambrose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 61–76. In addition to the excellent bibliography provided by Lindquist, see also the recent discussion of the medieval theology of nudity in Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 55–65.

[5]   On monsters informing notions of the ideal body, see the comments of Dale, "Phantasms", 407–09. On the notion of transumption, see Leonard Barkan, *Transuming Passion: Ganymede and the Erotics of Humanism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[6]   Adhémar, Jean, *Influences antiques dans l'art du Moyen Âge français* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1939), 179. Alden F. Megrew described the centaurs of Plaimpied as part of the imaginative and often humorous works that drew on classical motifs: "A Church of Berry: The Abbey of St. Martin at Plaimpied", *Gesta* 7 (1968): 32.

recognition in the Middle Ages lies in the fact that Bernard of Clairvaux specifically mentions centaurs in a celebrated passage in his *Apologia*.

> But apart from this, in the cloisters, before the eyes of brothers while they read – what is that ridiculous monstrosity doing, an amazing kind of deformed beauty and yet a beautiful deformity? What are the filthy apes doing there? The fierce lions? The monstrous centaurs? The creatures, part man and part beast? The striped tigers? The fighting soldiers? The hunters blowing horns? You may see many bodies under one head, and conversely many heads on one body. On one side the tail of a serpent is even seen on a quadruped, on the other side the head of a quadruped is on the body of a fish. Over there an animal has a horse for the front half and a goat for the back; here a creature which is horned in front is equine behind. In short, everywhere so plentiful and astonishing a variety of contradictory forms is seen that one would rather read in the marble than in books, and spend the whole day wondering at every single one of them than in meditating on the law of God. Good, God! If one is not ashamed of the absurdity, why is one not at least troubled at the expense?[7]

In what follows I consider what motivated carvers to saliently articulate centaur's bodies, taking as my touchstone a nave capital in the abbey church of St-Pierre, Mozac (fig. 9), probably carved in the 1130s.[8] The carving, on which traces of polychromy can be observed, features two centaurs bounding toward the center to grasp what appear to be either grapes or flowers. Tendrils of vegetation issue from a large acanthus-like form at the capital's center and run along the astragal. The archeological fidelity of the

---

[7]   Translation in Rudolph, '*Things of Greater Importance*', 283. The Latin reads: "Ceterum in claustris, coram legentibus fratribus, quid facit illa ridicula monstruositas, mira quaedam deformis formositas ac formosa deformitas? Quid ibi immundae simiae? Quid feri leones? Quid monstruosi centauri? Quid semihomines? Quid maculosae tigrides? Quid milites pugnantes? Quid venatores tubicinantes? Videas sub uno capite multa corpora, et rursus in uno corpore capita multa. Cernitur hinc in quadrupede cauda serpentis, illinc in pisce caput quadrupedis. Ibi bestia praefert equum, capram trahens retro dimidiam; hic cornutum animal equum gestat posterius. Tam multa denique, tamque mira diversarum formarum apparet ubique varietas, ut magis legere libeat in marmoribus, quam in codicibus, totumque diem occupare singula ista mirando, quam in lege Dei meditando. Proh Deo! si non pudet ineptiarum, cur vel non piget expensarum?" Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri M. Rochais, 8 vols (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957–1977), 5.3: 106.

[8]   See the occasional remarks on centaurs in Avital Heyman, '*That Old Pride of the Men of the Auvergne': Laity and Church in Auvergnat Romanesque Sculpture* (London: Pindar, 2005), 60, 121, 144, 147. See also the foundational argument of Louis Bréhier, who suggested that recourse to antique motifs contributed to its originality, "Les traits originaux de l'iconographie dans la sculpture romane de l'Auvergne", in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Arthur Kingsley Porter*, ed. Wilhelm Koehler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 2: 389–93.

centaurs is noteworthy, for some contemporary representations of these creatures deviate substantially from classical norms, such as a centaur at St-Andoche, Saulieu, that sports a shirt and a turban (fig. 17). The latter clothing item, often associated with Islamic culture, could situate this work within a visual discourse of Otherness.[9]

The Mozac centaurs have drawn relatively little scholarly comment, though Adhémar influentially classified medieval centaurs into broad categories, including those

FIG. 9. CENTAURS, CAPITAL FROM ST-PIERRE, MOZAC

that hunted birds, which he linked with the classical figure of Chiron, and those in the company of harpies, which he believed stemmed from the association of these two creatures in bestiaries.[10] A third type, namely a centaur with a bow and no visible target, Adhémar associated with the zodiacal sign of Sagittarius. Although he does not cite the work directly, the Mozac capital aligns with a group of affronted centaurs that Adhémar believed took any number of "decorative combinations". By this, he meant that sculptors employed a range of compositions. At Charlieu, affronted centaurs pull beards and at Bruyères a figure nocks an arrow and takes aim at a bird. Unfortunately, Adhémar simply identified, rather than explained, this category of centaurs.

Others have attempted to identify a moral in Romanesque carvings of centaurs. William Travis collected a wide range of patristic sources to argue that sculptures of centaurs functioned primarily as symbols of vice.[11] In a discussion of Burgundian examples, Marcello Angheben subsequently argued that these figures functioned to visualize the "church under threat" (*église menacée*).[12] To my mind, however, there is something lost in translation in these interpretations that rely heavily on exegetical treatises for their insights. For these do not explain precisely how theological speculations inform the specific articulation of sculptural

[9]   See, for example, the provocative thesis of Otto Werckmeister, "The Islamic Rider in the Beatus of Girona", *Gesta* 36 (1997): 101–06.

[10]   Adhémar, *Influences antiques*, 179–82.

[11]   Travis, "Of Sirens and Otocentaurs". See also Ingeborg Tetzlaff, *Romanische Portale in Frankreich: Waage und Schwert, Schlussel und Schrift* (Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1977), 48–53. Moralized readings of centaurs have a long history in the study of Romanesque sculpture. See, for example, Marie-Thérèse Brincard, "Les Chapiteaux histoirés de l'église de Cunault", *Bulletin Monumental* 89 (1930): 113–47; Joseph Barrère, *Histoire réligieuse et monumentale d'Agen depuis les temps les plus reculéa jusqu'à nos jours*, 2 vols (Agen: Achille Chairou, 1855–56), 1: chap. 2.

[12]   Angheben, *Chapiteaux romans*, 354–57.

forms. Such "readings" of medieval art that have roots in nineteenth-century methods[13] may offer insights into potential associations of images of centaurs in learned viewers' minds, but they ultimately do little to explain the physicality of these sculptural objects.

I do not doubt that moral readings are important for our understanding of medieval art, but this operative assumption potentially precludes other readings or, perhaps more problematically, determines what it is we see. In what follows, I consider what other needs the ubiquitous figure of the centaur might have addressed for its medieval audiences, with specific attention to their work as sculptures, rather than ideograms of theology. I begin with a discussion of the evocation of the classical in Bernard's *Apologia*, an aspect that has, to my knowledge, received no sustained comment. This offers some insight, I suggest, into the nature of classical quotations in medieval representations of monsters. I then consider a broader pattern of Romanesque sculptors' formal interest in antique male nudes. Far from an emblem of shame, the male nude in many twelfth-century carvings highlighted a heroic or somatic brand of spirituality. I conclude that the unclothed bodies of monsters from classical traditions can likewise be interpreted in such a light. In other words, Romanesque sculptors appear to have had a more capacious understanding of what constituted ideal bodies, for they could extend this category to the monstrous.

GESTURING TO THE CLASSICAL

Numerous historians have perused the celebrated passage in Bernard's *Apologia* for insights into the austere reforms of the Cistercian movement, for the monk condemns flights of fancy in stone as both distractions to the meditations of the faithful and as an egregious waste of money that could be better spent on the poor.[14] Detecting an "aesthetic attitude", Meyer Schapiro perceptively noted that the very appositeness of Bernard's chiastic description (deformed beauty, beautiful deformity, e.g.) belied the monk's unmistakable appreciation of the artistry of these carvings.[15] The monk clearly had spent time absorbed in contemplating these works and all too keenly felt the pull of their siren call. Bernard's visceral reaction, Thomas Dale has suggested, has parallels in Cistercians' accounts of visions, which both tempt and repel.[16] Monstrous carvings could be, Dale

---

[13] For further discussion of reading metaphors, see Chapter 3.
[14] See, for example, Rudolph, '*Things of Greater Importance*', 80–103. For a recent consideration of Bernard's writings, see Isabelle Marchesin, "Enjeux et usages de l'Apologia à Guillaume de Saint-Thierry dans la tradition de l'histoire de l'art", in *L'actualité de saint Bernard. Actes du colloque du collège des Bernardins, Paris, 2009* (Paris: Lethielleux, 2010), 213–40.
[15] Schapiro, "Aesthetic Attitude".
[16] Dale, "Nude at Moissac".

suggested, much more than mere distractions for monks, for they could serve as vehicles for spiritual contemplation. Caroline Walker Bynum subsequently interpreted Bernard's *Apologia* broadly within the context of his spiritual writings,[17] arguing that the monk's notion of mixtures, a term applied to monsters as well as to a wide range of theological issues, including the doctrine of the Incarnation, points to a central paradox in his thought: the process of becoming one with God (*unitas*) takes place in a dual reality of matter and spirit. It is in terms of such a worldview that one can understand Bernard's own remarkable statement that he was a chimera, signaling ambivalence over his dual pursuit of the active and contemplative life.[18]

A salient aspect of Bernard's text, one that to my knowledge has received no sustained scholarly commentary, is its attempt to evoke the physical presence of sculpture through its adoption of the conventions of classical rhetoric. The monk takes pains to locate carvings within the space of the cloister, a site, named in the opening line of the passage, that stood as the center of monks' daily life,[19] signaled textually by the mention of reading. Bernard then employs a range of adverbial place markers (there [*ibi*], over there [*illinc*], here [*hic*], for example) that in their variety suggest a range of locations within space. Obviously, one could not map these out based on Bernard's description, but he is clearly interested in positioning each carving in a distinct space through the use of a variety of adverbs. This ekphrastic strategy was by no means invented by Bernard, having, for one, a parallel in Virgil's *Aeneid*, widely read as a Latin primer in medieval monasteries. Book one of the epic poem employs a similarly wide variety of locative adverbs as Aeneas views a series of frescos of the Trojan War that decorate a temple that Dido had dedicated to Juno in the city of Carthage. The opening lines suffice to demonstrate the use of various adverbs in evoking the varied positions of these images:

> 'en Priamus. sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi,
> sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.
> solue metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salutem.'
> sic ait atque animum pictura pascit inani
> multa gemens, largoque umectat flumine uultum.
> namque uidebat uti bellantes Pergama circum

---

[17]   Bynum, *Metamorphoses and Identity*, 113–62.

[18]   In addition to Bynum, see M. André Fracheboud, "Je suis le chimère de mon siècle: Le Problème action-contemplation au Coeur de saint Bernard", *Collectanea ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 16 (1954): 45–52, 128–38, 183–91; E. Rozanne Elder and John R. Sommerfeldt, eds, *The Chimaera of His Age: Studies on Bernard of Clairvaux* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980); John Sommerfeld, "The Chimaera Revisited", *Cîteaux: Commentraii Cistercienses. Revue d'histoire cistercienne/A Journal of Historical Studies* 38 (1987): 5–13; Christopher Holdsworth, "Bernard: Chimera of His Age?", in *Essays in Honor of Edward B. King*, ed. Robert G. Benson and Christopher Holdsworth (Sewanee, TN: University of the South, 1991), 147–63.

[19]   Paul Meyvaert, "The Medieval Monastic Claustrum", *Gesta* 12 (1973): 53–59.

hac fugerunt Grai, premeret Troiana iuuentus;
hac Phryges, instaret curru cristatus Achilles.
nec procul hinc Rhesi niueis tentoria uelis
agnoscit lacrimans, primo quae prodita somno
Tydides multa uastabat caede cruentus,
ardentisque auertit equos in castra prius quam
pabula gustassent Troiae Xanthumque bibissent.
parte alia fugiens amissis Troilus armis …

'Look here is Priam, Even so far away
Great valor has due honor; they weep here
For how the world goes, and our life that passes
Touches their hearts. Throw off your fear. This fame
Insures some kind of refuge.'
                              He broke off
To feast his eyes and mind on a mere image,
Sighing often, cheeks grown wet with tears,
To see again how, fighting around Troy,
The Greeks broke here, and ran before the Trojans,
And there Phrygians ran, as plumed Achilles
Harried them in his warcar. Nearby, then,
He recognized the snowy canvas tents
Of Rhesus, and more tears came: these, betrayed
In first sleep, Diomedes devastated,
Swording many, till he reeked with blood,
Then turned the mettlesome horses toward the beachhead
Before they tasted Trojan grass or drank
At Xanthus ford.
                              And on another panel
Troilus, without his armor …[20]

These verses jump from scene to scene in a manner that is both highly selective and episodic. In other words, Virgil does not offer the reader anything approximating a full account of the scenes in the narrative cycle. This is a key point, and it anticipates the incomplete vision of the cloister offered in Bernard's *Apologia*. Nevertheless, Virgil offers an unmistakable message through his ekphrasis, one that glorifies the Trojan people, as well as the daring of Aeneas, who is the Father of Rome. In this way, the part adequately stands for the whole.

By contrast, Bernard's episodic and selective account ultimately does not offer a coherent message, much less a description of a rationally organized space. Bernard's reader is transported rapidly from place to place, reproducing the sense of distraction that pervades his criticisms of sculpture in the *Apologia*. Each monstrous scene is presented in serial

[20] Virgil, *Aeneidos liber primus*, ed. R.G. Austin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 15 (ll. 461–74); Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 20.

fashion, as a string of substantives. Though the elision of verbs is common practice in Latin, within this context it nevertheless serves to highlight the subjects, which are defined not so much by their narrative or symbolic import, as by the monstrosity that they make present. In sum, the passage emphasizes each capital in its own baffling singularity, and, in this way, the monk underscores what he deems to be the cacophonous incoherence of cloister sculpture ensembles.

We might parenthetically note that Virgil follows in a venerable tradition of describing a work of art that does not exist, of which Homer's lengthy ekphrasis on Achilles' shield in the *Illiad* is the most obvious example. Medieval examples may include Theodulf of Orleans' description of a vase that includes scenes of Hercules, which Larry Nees argues offers a vehicle to engage theological and political concerns.[21] Twelfth-century poets similarly offered elaborate descriptions. Vincent Debiais, for one, argues that Baldric of Dol's poem for the Countess Adèle negotiates between *poesis* and *imago*, between an actual work that he may have seen – in this case the Bayeux tapestry – and an ideal mental construct.[22] According to Debiais, Baldric's aim is to highlight the fact that art, including poetry, can organize the raw material of the world in a harmonious fashion.

Bernard's chaotic vision of the cloister offers a very different perspective on art. It is likewise unclear whether or not he describes an actual cloister, for no extant site precisely fits his description. This might be explained away as a consequence of the losses of time, for many twelfth-century cloisters have been destroyed, but I am inclined to view Bernard's description as the product of sustained reflection on the dangers, as well as attractions, of sculptures, which is suggested by the probity of his remarks. There is something generalized in his language that indicates that he has gleaned insights based on his experiences walking through cloisters at numerous monasteries. Bernard does not describe what he sees, so much as he offers a creative synthesis of the many cloister sculptures he has seen. Bernard's apparent adoption of techniques of classical ekphrasis does not serve to diminish the sense of physicality conveyed in his text. Rather, given the relative dearth of descriptions of medieval art in Europe, it seems perfectly understandable that the monk would have turned to classical rhetoric to convey his intense somatic reactions to sculpture.[23] This does not mean, however, that Bernard's perceptive criticisms are misguided, for,

---

[21] Lawrence Nees, *A Tainted Mantle: Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

[22] Vincent Debiais, "The Poem of Baudri for the Countess Adèle: A Starting Point for Broad Reading of Medieval Ekphrasis" (forthcoming). I thank Vincent Debiais for sharing this research with me. See also a similar point on this poem in S.A. Brown and M. Herren, "The *Adelae comitissae* of Baudry of Bourgueil and the Bayeux Tapestry", *Anglo-Norman Studies* 16 (1993): 57–58.

[23] John Gage, "Horatian Reminisces in Two Twelfth-Century Art Critics", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973): 359–60. Gage makes this argument in relationship to Bernard, though he does not cite Virgil as a possible source for the

as has been suggested, the monk was an extraordinarily perceptive critic. This extends to his masterful evocation of the physicality of sculpture, an interest that can be found in many representations of male nudes in contemporary sculpture.

MALE NUDES

There was widespread interest in ancient sculpture during the twelfth century. Guibert of Nogent (1053–1124) wrote admiringly of the limbs of ancient statues; Hildebert of Lavardin, Bishop of Le Mans (*reg.* 1096–1133), praised the ruins of Rome; and Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, acquired ancient sculptures for his garden.[24] Romanesque sculptors' knowledge of classical models, even if tenuous or indirect, played a part in the reemergence of subtly articulated male bodies. A case in point is a late eleventh-century capital from San Martín de Frómista (fig. 10), now in the Museo Arqueológico in Palencia, that features a series of male nudes that stride and gesticulate restively. These figures manifest sensitive modeling of the limbs and torsos, with careful delineation of the abdominal and pectoral muscles. Remarkably, the precise inspiration for this work has been identified in a Roman sarcophagus in the Museo Arqueológico in Madrid that features Orestes avenging the death of his father. During the Middle Ages this carving was located at Husillos, only a few kilometers south of Frómista, and the sculptor of the capital doubtless studied it directly.[25] In addition to learning how to articulate the body in precociously naturalistic fashion from his classical model, this sculptor likewise learned to establish visual rhythms across the frieze-like arrangement of forms along the horizontal axis of the capital basket. The convincing translation of this complex visual language from antiquity to narrate a non-classical story suggests a degree of artistic mastery and deliberateness that probably had a complex set of motivations. It seems limiting to simply cast it as an example of Erwin Panofsky's "law of disjunction", superficially or unwittingly rendering a Christian story with the formal language of

---

Apologia. See also the discussion of experience articulated in terms of tradition in the previous chapter.

[24] See, for example, Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312–130* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 161–202; Schapiro, *Romanesque Art*, 1–27.

[25] This model was first identified by Serafín Moralejo Álvarez, "Sobre la formación del estilo escultórico de Frómista y Jaca", *Actas del 23 Congreso Internaciónal de Historia del Arte* (Granada, 1973), I: 427–34. See also his "La sculpture romane de la cathédrale de Jaca: État des questions", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 10 (1979): 79–106. Both these essays are reprinted in *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia y otros estudios: Homenaje al Prof. Dr. Serafín Moralejo Álvarez*, ed. Ángela Franco Mata, 3 vols (Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 2004), I: 65–69, 141–60. Most recently on this transmission, see Franciso Prado-Vilar, "Tragedy's Forgotten Beauty: The Medieval Return of Orestes", in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi*, ed. Jas Elsner and Janet Huskinson (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 83–118.

antique art,[26] yet the presence of an identifiable antique model has typically been given explicative force among a number of stylistically related carvings at Frómista, Jaca, and Louarre.[27]

Horst Bredekamp considered at length what motivations this Romanesque "workshop" might have had for adopting a classical vocabulary.[28] Appealing to Aby Warburg's notion of the *Pathosformel*, a powerfully affective emotional gesture distilled from antique art, he argued that the Husillos

FIG. 10. BATTLE SCENE, NAVE CAPITAL FROM SAN MARTÍN DE FRÓMISTA

sarcophagus afforded artists an avenue to create apotropaic formulae, independent of medieval iconographic traditions. Bredekamp insisted that the sculptors' imaginations were not guided by Church doctrine, even if the products of this artistic "freedom" could serve the very Christian purpose of warding off demons. This brilliant attempt to unyoke the activity of the medieval sculptor from theological concerns underplays or sidesteps the potential of nudes to serve as exempla of piety. Medieval theologians commonly distinguished between flesh, the fertile ground of sin, and bodies, which were fashioned by God. Artists likewise could move from emphasizing the decaying bodies of sinners, especially demons, to rendering embodied models of the faith. For example, Christ's prominently displayed penis in the mosaics of the Arian and Orthodox Baptistries in Ravenna serves in part to assert his human nature.[29]

[26] Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksells, 1960; rpt New York: Harper Torchbook, 1969). Panofksy discusses several male nudes in this influential study. However, many of the methodological premises, as well as assumptions he made regarding their subject matter, have recently been questioned, perhaps most provocatively by Gilbert, "The Pisa Baptistry Pulpit", 26–27 and passim.

[27] For a masterful overview of the scholarship, see José Luis Senra, "La realidad material de la iglesia de San Martín de Frómista en el siglo XII: de 1066 a 1904", in *San Martín de Frómista: ¿paradigma o historicismo?* Actas de las Jornadas celebradas en Frómista los dias 17 y 18 de septiembre de 2004 (Valladolid: Fundación del Patreimonio Histórico de Castilla y León, 2005), 39–68.

[28] Horst Bredekamp, "Die nordspanische Hofskulptur und die Freiheit der Bildhauer", in *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Skulptur im 12./13. Jahrhundert*, ed. Herbert Beck and Kerstin Hengevoss-Dürkop, 2 vols (Frankfurt: Heinrich, 1994), 263–74.

[29] Thomas Mathews, *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 115–41. Mathews's discussion engages Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987) and Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion* (Chicago, IL: University

FIG. 11. SACRIFICE
OF ISAAC, JACA

In this light, it is significant that Bredekamp omitted from his discussion a capital representing the Sacrifice of Isaac at Jaca cathedral (fig. 11), stylistically related to the other male nudes he discusses. On the left face of the sculpture, Abraham wears only a swatch of fabric over his shoulder and, knife in hand, strides toward his son. Positioned at the corner, Isaac sways out toward the viewer, a posture that perhaps signals a conflicted compliance to his father's will. Despite considerable limitations of scale and format, the sculptor offers a vision of male bodies that move self-assuredly in a manner paralleling many aspects observable in antique sculpture.[30]

It goes without saying that Abraham and Isaac are not described as unclothed in Genesis 22. But it bears stressing that medieval theologians, too, rarely confined their interpretations *ad litteram*. Various authors creatively interpreted this Old Testament story to myriad ends – as anticipating the Eucharist, in soteriological discussions, and even for justifying the practice of tonsure[31] – none of which have any literal or historical relationship to the biblical text. With similar license, the Jaca sculptor creatively inflected and drew from what he had learned from his encounter with classical art to imagine the story of Isaac as an example of an embodied and performative faith that complements contemporary trends in spirituality. Robert Javelet and Karl Morrison, among others, have argued that during the twelfth century progress in the spiritual life was conceived in terms of the human body being created in resemblance to God.[32] In the beginning of human history, Adam and Eve wore no clothes

of Chicago Press, 1983). On the gendering of Christ's body in medieval art, see also Susan L. Smith, "The Bride Stripped Bare: A Rare Type of the Disrobing of Christ", *Gesta* 34 (1995): 126–46.

[30]   The energy conveyed by these figures postures and by their sensitively carved anatomies lacks the taint of "putrefaction" that Michael Camille identified as characteristic of medieval representations of the body, including copies of antique sculpture (*Gothic Idol*, 92). Arguing that representations of the body were akin to "fallen idols", Camille suggested that the awkwardness of many medieval nudes arises from Augustinian notions of the body as an inevitable site of decay, indices of the transient earthly realm. By contrast, the expansive, supple forms that constitute the bodies on the Jaca capital are full of life.

[31]   Jérôme Bâschet, *Le sein du père: Abraham et la paternité dans l'Occident medieval* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000).

[32]   Robert Javelet, *Image et resemblance au douzième siècle de saint Anselme à Alain de Lille*, 2 vols (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1967); Karl Morrison, *"I am You": The Hermeneutics*

in Eden. Only after the fall, when man's likeness to God faded, did they cover themselves.[33] Within the Bible, nudity could signal an effort to bridge the divide between humans and the divine, such as David's penitential dance.[34] Along these lines, the nudity at Jaca might be construed partly as an attempt to imagine a rapprochement between earthly and divine: Abraham and Isaac hypostatize the virtue of faith and obedience to God's will.

Twelfth-century sculptors rendered other Old Testament figures in similarly embodied terms, such as on a pier relief from Savigny (fig. 12). Here a nude man entangled in vines appends three other scenes from Samson's life, carved on the capital's other faces. These faces feature the hero in the following scenes: identified by the titulus "Samson", wrestling a lion; blind and led by a youth; and destroying the Philistine temple. Within this series, the nude figure is probably an allusion to an apocryphal legend of Samson uprooting a tree that sometimes features in medieval art, including examples at Alspach, Limburg, Maienfeld, Pécs, and Remagen. Citing the medieval association between male nudes and classical art, Ilene Forsyth identified here an allusion to Hercules and linked the syllepsis in these works to a long exegetical tradition, initiated by Fulgentius, that cast the two heroes in moral terms.[35] Hercules' journey to Hades, as well as by other Heroes such as Aeneas and Orpheus, symbolized the descent

FIG. 12. SAMSON UPROOTING A TREE (?), FRENCH (SAVIGNY), CAPITAL-PIER WITH SAMSON, FROM THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ST MARTIN, c.1150–1170

---

of Empathy in Western Literature, Theology and Art (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[33] It will be recalled that medieval images of the soul typically show an unclothed homunculus; Michael Camille, Master of Death: The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 215–24.

[34] Pictorial examples of this scene include an eleventh-century miniature in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. clm. 13067, fol. 18. Herbert Kessler argues that David's semi-nakedness stems from a Touronian tradition manifest in the First Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, B.N., Ms. lat. 1, fol. 215v); The Illustrated Bibles from Tours (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 97.

[35] Ilene Forsyth, "Five Sculptures from a Single Limestone Formation: The Case of Savigny", Gesta 33 (1994): 47–52; eadem, "The Samson Monolith", in The Brummer Collection of Medieval Art: The Duke University Museum of Art, ed. Caroline Bruzelius (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 21–38.

of the spirit into the earthly realm, ultimately transcended by the heroes'
apotheoses; their earthly struggles allegorized spiritual combats. Twelfth-
century authors made similar analogies, including William of Conches
and Hildebert of Lavardin.[36] Some, most notoriously Jerome, may have
questioned the moral worth of pagan letters, but many churchmen without
any trace of irony quoted Cicero, Virgil, and others as they exhorted the
practice of the virtuous Christian life.[37]

In a study of the literary reception of Job in the Middle Ages, Ann W.
Astell argues that authors engaged in a practice of literary emulation that
consisted of a *conversion* – in contradistinction to a *conventio* – of classical
epics.[38] Boethius, Fulgentius, Gregory the Great, Rabanus Maurus, and
others recast the Old Testament figure largely in terms of an antique hero.
Job's divestment, a staple of medieval painters,[39] was a central feature
of his heroism. Nude and devoid of arms, Job unflinchingly faced the
Enemy in his steadfast adherence to his faith.[40] Similarly, Christ refused
earthly weapons and glory in favor of spiritual power, dying naked on
the cross. The physical humiliations and torture that Christ willingly
endured radically inverted the model of the classical hero, characterized
by athleticism on the battlefield.

Martyrs, witnesses to Christ's exemplary life and suffering, were often
rendered in a state of undress as they endured torments and death,
sometimes without any textual foundation for this nudity. A miniature
from a celebrated manuscript of the *Passion of Edmund, king and martyr*,[41]
features the conjoining of the dead saint's head to his body, covered
loosely by a rich cloth. In this way, the scene contrasts the tightly wrapped
corpses that widely feature in medieval art, such as the celebrated scene on
the Bayeux tapestry in which King Edward's body is prepared for burial.
Emphasis on Edmund's body serves to assert the physical presence of the
saint, a central feature of the cult of relics, and the lavish cloth evokes the
contemporary practice of wrapping relics in precious textiles. Reunification
of the severed members of Edmund's corpse visually inscribes medieval
terminology, in which saintly remains, however fragmentary, could be
referred to as the "corpus". Cynthia Hahn has persuasively argued that

---

[36]   Respectively, J. Hatinguais, "Points de vue sur la volonté et le jugement dans l'oeuvre
humaniste chartrain", *L'homme et son destin d'après les penseurs du moyen âge*, Actes du
premier Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale (Paris, 1960): 424–25; PL 172,
1002.
[37]   Giles Constable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Press, 1967), II: 29–44; Leclercq, *Love of Learning*, 112–50.
[38]   Ann W. Astell, *Job, Boethius, and Epic Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press,
1994).
[39]   In numerous twelfth-century examples, Job features completely unclothed or with only
a loose-fitting cloth. See, for example, Paris, B.N. MS lat 15307, fol. 1v; ill. in Walter Cahn,
*Romanesque Manuscripts: The Twelfth Century, A Survey of Illuminated Manuscripts in
France*, 2 vols. (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), II: fig. 156.
[40]   Astell, *Job*, 161–65.
[41]   New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.736, fol. 17r.

emphasis on the body in Romanesque martyrdom cycles makes the lessons of their lives all the more palpable and accessible for medieval viewers, who are enjoined to model themselves, bodily and spiritually, after these saintly exempla.[42]

Given their reliance upon antique models, both visual and conceptual, it would be easy to read Romanesque male nudes as heroic, as conforming to what R.W. Southern identified as an "epic" Christianity that characterized the early Middle Ages.[43] However, Southern likewise identified the Romanesque period as transitional, a moment when the "personal and secret tie between man God" emerged as a central feature of piety. The emphasis on the body within a sculpture could tangibly evoke a connection between the body of the faithful and that of Christ, the model *par excellence* for the practice of the religious life. Jerome's claim that "nude, I follow a nude Christ" (*nudus nudum Christum sequi*) succinctly likens the Son's body – and not his soul or spirit – with that of the devotee in order to bridge the divide between the human and the divine. Reiterated through the Middle Ages, this formula became especially popular among twelfth-century monks, part of a wider trend toward increasing interest in the *imitatio Christi*, including aspects of the savior's body.[44] As Giles Constable has argued, the substitution of terms like "pauper" and "humilis" more or less interchangeably with "nudus" by twelfth-century authors marks an effort to evoke virtues such as humility and poverty that inspired church reformers.[45] If the body was the arena in which the athlete of Christ practiced his austere observances, it likewise provided an intimate and indissoluble link to God.

A semi-nude figure in the tympanum above a portal that gives access to the abbey church of Vézelay (fig. 13) offers an explicit example in which the body of the faithful makes a direct connection to the embodied Christ. Alongside another man, perhaps Joseph,[46] this figure wears only a cape

---

[42] Hahn, *Portrayed on the Heart*, 89.

[43] R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953), 219–57.

[44] Lists of medieval uses of this formula are found in Matthäus Bernards, "*Nudus nudum Christum sequi*", *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 14 (1951): 148–51; idem, *Speculum Virginum: Geistigkeit und Seelenleben der Frau im Hochmittelalter* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1955), 153, n. 169; Giles Constable, "*Nudus nudum Christum sequi* and Parallel Formulas in the Twelfth Century", in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Huntston Williams on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. F. Forrester Church and Timothy George (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), 83–91; Réginald Grégoire, "L'adage ascétique 'Nudus nudum Christum sequi'", *Studi storici in onore di Ottorino Bertolini* (Pisa: Pacini, 1972), I: 395–409; Gregorio Penco, "L'imitazione di Cristo nell'agiografia monastica", *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 18 (1966): 29–32. For the application of this formula to the female body in the later Middle Ages, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 181–238.

[45] Constable, "Parallel Formulas", 89–90; *Reformation of the Twelfth Century*.

[46] Joseph sometimes features in scenes of the Adoration, but, if this identification is correct, it is not clear why he bears a gift, a detail, to my knowledge, without parallel in

and appears to the left of the enthroned Madonna and Child, who receive three magi. It seems highly unlikely that either of these men are magi, for although the Bible fails to specify their number, by the twelfth century artists and writers had long concurred that three men from the East bowed before Christ and offered him gifts.[47] Regardless of identity, the semi-nude figure, who looks onto the Adoration scene, acts as an explicitly embodied witness to the arrival of the Word Incarnate, a notion elaborated in the Infancy cycle carved in the tympanum's lower register.

In a discussion primarily centered on early modern drawings and paintings, Margaret Miles influentially and persuasively argued that the Christian pictorial tradition cast female nudes as figures of an

---

medieval art. Hugo Kehrer suggested that this is a donor figure: *Die heiligen drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst*, 2 vols (Leipzig: Seemann, 1908), II: 123. However, medieval artists typically feature donors holding models of a building.

[47] Names were invented for all three, probably first in the West in Pseudo-Bede's *Collectanea*, and their remains were translated from Milan to Cologne in 1164. Occasionally medieval artists added figures to the core group of the Adoration, as with the evangelist (?) on a Limoges chasse; Ferdinand Stuttman, *Mittelalter*, Bildkataloge des Kestner-Museums Hannover 8 (Hannover: Kestner-Museum, 1966), entry 75. I am unaware of a scene in which Joseph offers a gift.

embodied sinfulness; male nudes, by contrast, signaled an active faith.[48] Men patronized most Romanesque sculpture, often with an eye for an audience of masculine communities. Within such a patronage structure, it is understandable that the male body was often deemed the most suitable vehicle for imagining the exemplary pursuit of the religious life. That there is no obvious male equivalent to *luxuria* figures, on which pronounced breasts and genitalia suffer the attacks of snakes and toads, perhaps offers further indirect evidence for this bias. The many examples of figures displaying large phalluses on corbels and other carvings lack visual cues that explicitly frame their bodies in morally negative terms.[49] Indeed, these latter works are carved with an élan, bordering on the humorous, that does not obviously or necessarily relate to moralizing schemes.[50] Contemporary texts articulate similar notions. Master Gregory's enthusiastic description of the ancient bronze *spinario*, displayed outside the Lateran palace in the twelfth century, draws attention to the sculpture's oversized phallus as a source of wonder that borders on amusement.[51] Perhaps such earthy humor, and not an attempt to signal lust or some other vice, partly informed the many twelfth-century representations of the *spinario*, often with pronounced genitalia, including an example within the Pentecost tympanum at Vézelay.[52]

The few twelfth-century sculptures that decidedly cast men or boys as objects of desire tend to be reticent in their articulation of the male body; the visual signs that would elicit desires for medieval viewers are difficult for modern historians to detect. The best-known example of a sculpture that addresses same-sex lust is a capital of the Rape of Ganymede from Vezelay (fig. 14). Ilene Forsyth first interpreted the presence of this story of Zeus's love for a shepherd boy in terms of older men desiring young

---

[48] See, for example, Margaret Miles, *Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning in the Christian West* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1989), 117–44.

[49] Such works are generally deemed as moralizing, generally by conflating images of genitalia with the sin of lust. See, for example, Anthony Weir and James Jerman, *Images of Lust: Sexual Carvings on Medieval Churches* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1993).

[50] See the remarks of Paul Binski, "The Angel Choir at Lincoln and the Poetics of the Gothic Smile", *Art History* 20 (1997): 350–74.

[51] "De ridiculoso simulachro Priapi. Est Etiam aliud eneum [*sic*] simulacrum valde ridiculosum quod Priapum dicunt. Qui demisso capite velud spinam calcatum educturus de pede, asperam lesionem pacientis speciem reprentat. Cui si demisso capite velut quid agat exploratus suspexeris, mire magnitudinis virilia videbis", in G. Rushforth, "Magister Gregorius De Mirabilibus Urbis Romae: A New Description of Rome in the Twelfth Century", *Journal of Roman Studies* 9 (1919): 49. See also Richard Cocke, "Masaccio and the Spinario, Piero and the Pathos: Observations on the Reception of the Antique in Renaissance Painting", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1980): 22–23. See the remarks of David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 326–32.

[52] Roberto Salvini, "La Representation de l'antiquité dans la sculpture romane et une figuration classique: le tireur d'épine", in *La Representation de l'antiquité au moyen âge*, ed. Danielle Buschinger and André Crepin (Vienna: K.M. Halosar, 1982), 299–324.

FIG. 14. RAPE
OF GANYMEDE,
NAVE CAPITAL
OF VÉZELAY

boys within monastic communities.[53] It bears adding to this reading that same-sex desire is not signaled by the figure of the boy, whose garments twist upward in a manner that renders him curiously disembodied. The boy's beautiful body, the object of desire in Classical texts and images, is curiously absent from the Vézelay capital. Rather, as Forsyth pointed out, the inclusion of a demon that grimaces and wags his tongue offers an unmistakable moral gloss.

Such a moralizing message, warning against the sexual temptations of the male body, is perhaps further underscored at Vézelay by its many celebrated carvings of demons. These figures are all cast with male physiques, but, significantly, none features genitalia. Rather than visually sexualize these figures, the sculptor tended to emphasize the putrescence of their bodies. The flesh of a figure astride a mythological beast (figs 28 and 29), discussed in Chapter 4, seems to rot away from his vertebrae and ribcage. Viewed in concert with the indecorous posture and screaming mouth, this nude cuts an extremely anti-erotic figure. Such carvings functioned very differently for the fashioning of monastic identities than the venerable textual tradition of casting the bodies of demonic Others in sensual terms.[54]

In other contexts, sculptures of male bodies could elicit strong erotic desires in medieval viewers. In an unabashedly sensual vision, Rupert of Deutz imagined that he deeply kissed the corpus of a crucifix.[55] The passage is significant for the monk relies on his imaginative interaction with an art object – in distinction from, say, theological argument or exegetical traditions – in the practice of his faith. A nuanced erotics of Romanesque sculpture, which does not reductively conflate body with lust

---

[53]　Ilene Forsyth, "The Ganymede Capital at Vézelay", *Gesta* 15 (1976): 241–46; V.A. Kolve, "Ganymede/Son of Getron: Medieval Monasticism and the Drama of Same-Sex Desire", *Speculum* 73 (1998): 1014–67.

[54]　David Brakke, "Ethiopian Demons: Male Sexuality, the Black Skinned Other, and the Monastic Self", *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10 (2001): 501–35. See also Mâle, *Religious Art in France*, 364–76.

[55]　Richard Trexler, "Gendering Jesus Crucified", in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1990), 107–20. More recently, see Sara Lipton, "'The Sweet Lean of his Head': Writing about Looking at the Crucifix in the High Middle Ages", *Speculum* 80 (2005): 1172–208.

or imagine desire in exclusively heterosexual terms, remains to be written. The twelfth century was a period that witnessed the birth of the genre of Romance; there was widespread belief in the potential of love and desire to elevate the individual.[56] Similar ideas circulated in theological circles. In their careful readings of the Canticles, the most sensual book of the Bible, Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Thierry sublimated the reciprocal kiss of spouses (*dulces ad invicem*) toward spiritual ends.[57] It may be that the carefully articulated bodies of the heroes of the faith served partly to elicit desires, in both male and female viewers, that could ultimately be sublimated toward the desire for God. Sculpture was arguably the best representational technology available to medieval artists and patrons for asserting an immanent, physical presence, from demonic to saintly, often by means of well-articulated nudes.

BEAUTIFUL MONSTERS

A human body need not be the only vehicle suitable for articulating ideals and desires. For medieval audiences, centaurs might serve this role as well. To begin, medieval authors sometimes cast these creatures in a positive light, typically stressing their abilities as teachers. Statius's *Achillead*, quoted by numerous medieval authors,[58] contains a celebrated instance of the eponymous hero receiving knowledge from a centaur:

> mox ire per invia secum lustra gradu maiore trahens visisque docebat adridere feris nec fracta ruentibus undis saxa nec ad vastae trepidare silentia silvae. Iam tunc arma manu, iam tunc cervice pharetrae…

> he taught me to go with him through pathless deserts, dragging me on with mighty stride, and to laugh at the sight of wild beasts, nor tremble at the shattering of rocks by rushing torrents or at the silence of the lonely forest. Already at that time weapons were in my hand and quivers on my shoulders …[59]

---

[56] See, for example, C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Catherine E. Léglu and Stephen J. Milner, eds, *The Erotics of Consolation: Desire and Distance in the Late Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave, 2008); James J. Paxson and Cynthia A. Gravlee, eds, *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love, Ovid through Chaucer* (London: Associated University Press, 1998).

[57] Paul Verdeyen, "Introduction", in *Sermons sur le Cantique*, by Bernard of Clairvaux, (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2006), 43–46.

[58] Paul Clogan, ed., *The Medieval Achilleid of Statius* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 1–9; *The Silvae of Statius*, trans. Betty Rose Nagle (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 27; Statius, *The Thebaid: Seven Against Thebes*, trans. Charles Stanley Ross (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), xviii–xx.

[59] J.H. Mozley, ed. and trans., *Statius. Achilleid*, LCL 207 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 588–89. See Statius, *Thebeid, Books 8–12; Achilleid*, ed. and trans. D.R. Shackleton, Loeb Classical Library 498 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 394–98.

FIG. 15.
EDUCATION OF
ACHILLES (?),
NAVE CAPITAL
FROM VÉZELAY

Medieval *accessus* literature from the twelfth century notes that while the heroic deeds of Achilles were a central concern for Statius, the classical author likewise intended to relate Chiron's pedagogical method.[60] Medieval glosses on the *Achilleid* elaborate upon the wild setting of the hero's education,[61] but they fail to make explicit what specific aspects of the centaur's teaching were deemed most significant.

Achilles cycles on Late Antique silver plate emphasize the hero's education and several examples include scenes of Chiron teaching Achilles to hunt.[62] Achilles features in several guises in medieval art, but scenes in which he learns to hunt from Chiron are rare.[63] A capital along the south aisle of the nave of Vézelay may feature this episode (fig. 15).[64] On the left corner of the capital, a youth stands behind a centaur. Both figures have quivers slung across their shoulders and draw bows to shoot at a large bird on the right corner. Both figures even sport fringed belts. Similarities in gestures and posture between the youth and centaur on the capital perhaps suggest the transmission of knowledge, especially as the emulation of a teacher's gestures, in the widely construed medieval sense of the term, featured prominently in medieval pedagogical theory.[65] Two miniatures from a late twelfth-century medical miscellany, illustrating extracts of Pseudo-

---

[60] "Non tantum de illis agere que Achilles egit circa Troiam, sed quomodo eum Chiron nutrivit …", in *Medieval Achilleid*, ed. Clogan, 9.

[61] Ibid., 128–33.

[62] Ruth Leader-Newby, *Silver and Society in Late Antiquity: Functions and Meanings of Silver Plate in the Fourth to Seventh Centuries* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 123–71.

[63] For a Byzantine miniature featuring this episode, see Kurt Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 58, fig. 67.

[64] A slightly later capital from Chartres resembles that at Vézelay; Jean Adhémar, *Influences antiques*, 246, 267–69. Adhémar incorrectly believed that the Chartres capital was destroyed by a fire in the nineteenth century.

[65] C. Stephen Jaegar, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 900–1200* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994). Michael Camille identified in a twelfth-century sculpture from Reims, featuring a dragon, pedagogical concerns in "'Seeing and Lecturing': Disputation in a Twelfth-Century Tympanum from Reims", in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object*, ed. Elizabeth Sears and Thelma K. Thomas (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 75–87.
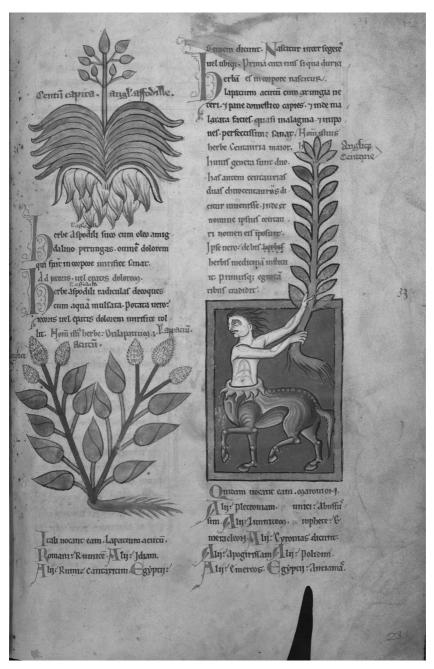
FIG. 16. CHIRON HOLDING CENTAURY, HERBARIUM, PSEUDO-APULIUS, OXFORD UNIVERSITY, BODLEIAN LIBRARY, MS. ASHMOLE 1462, FOL. 23R

Apulius' *Herbarium*, offer insight into Chiron's associations with learning.[66] In each case Chiron holds a medicinal plant (fig. 16). The inclusion of the centaur seems noteworthy, for earlier, extensively illustrated copies of the Herbarium, including two that were produced in England during the eleventh century, do not feature an image of Chiron.[67] Whatever signs of wildness this centaur might embody, during the twelfth century he was clearly seen to possess valuable knowledge.[68]

I am interested in this gesture of looking to a monster for knowledge, similar to what we encountered in the case of Anthony and the Faun in the previous chapter. For it involves looking to an Other with an open mind, not necessarily anticipating a negative message. In a similar vein, Jacques Lacan's *Seminar* succinctly used the term "extimacy" (*extimeté*) to describe an aspect of the complex process of self-definition.[69] This neologism signals an intimate alterity, an inextricably interwoven relationship between interior and exterior, that he considered central in the construction of identity. An Other cannot be neatly compartmentalized as distinct from the self, but integrally informs the definition of self. In a more recent philosophical rumination, Richard Kearney offers insights into the specific mechanics of such a process.[70] For Kearney, the field of psychoanalysis, from Sigmund Freud to Julia Kristeva, demonstrated the ways in which we distance the Other as not "us", and a key question of late twentieth-century thought was how to overcome this necessarily exclusionary conceptualization. Kearney argues that Jean-François Lyotard's and Slavoj Žižek's theorizations of the sublime, which highlight the incomprehensible aspect of encounters with the Other, abrogate any sense of morality and fail to articulate what might be gained through encounters with the Other. At the other extreme, Kearney argues that Jacques Derrida's and Emmanuel Levinas's "law of hospitality" overcompensates by enjoining us to embrace all strangers, some of whom might mean us real harm. Kearney tentatively suggests that we should aim to recognize oneself as "another", and the other as "another self". Such a conceptualization decenters both selves,

---

[66] Otto Pächt and Jonathan J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford, 3: British, Irish, and Icelandic Schools* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), no. 244, with further bibliography.

[67] Bodleian, ms. Ashmole 1431 (Canterbury); MS Bodleian 130 (Bury St Edmunds). See Pächt and Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford, 3*, nos 50, 53.

[68] Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx highlights the ways in which Romanesque artists transformed antique models toward largely decorative ends: "Le Centaure dans l'art préroman et roman. Sources d'inspiration et modes de transmission", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 37 (2006): 33–42.

[69] Cohen, *Of Giants*, xi–xiii; J.-A. Miller, "Extimité", in *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure, and Society*, ed. Mark Bracher et al. (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 74–87.

[70] Richard Kearney, *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 83–108.

acknowledging that both might have something to offer one another, while simultaneously acknowledging that either or both could be menaces.

Medieval viewers certainly did not understand monsters in the specific terms suggested by Lacan or Kearney and, as many previous art historical studies have pointed out,[71] monsters could effectively represent an ominous Other. Yet the ubiquitous figure of the centaur in Romanesque sculpture, as an ornament of many medieval spaces, conveys a widespread attentiveness to the forms of this monstrous body. At Mozac, such an attentiveness can be identified in a broader interest in the experimentation with plastic forms of the centaurs' bodies, rendered in rather substantial relief, and articulated through the use of a variety of chisels and tools. Schapiro noted long ago that twelfth-century commentators on medieval sculpture typically focused on specific aspects in voicing their appreciation of antique sculpture, especially on aspects of its technique.[72] This vision was often fragmentary in its nature, fixing on specific aspects of works. Guibert of Nogent admired the limbs of ancient sculptures, Hildebert of Lavardin the faces of ancient sculptures, and so on. Similarly, medieval builders often prominently incorporated parts of ancient buildings.[73] If the agenda of these appropriations remain contested, their use signals that there was widespread admiration for good artistic technique that was distinct from any stain of idolatry. Similarly, in a discussion of sirens and centaurs in the churches of Auvergne, Jacques Bousquet argued that these motifs were drawn from ancient sarcophagi for the "pleasure of decoration".[74] Bousquet shied away from reading a specific meaning, favoring instead to read these motifs as decorative in their intent.

This conclusion anticipates Oleg Grabar's notion of *terpnopoesis*, which he defines as the pleasure that decoration gives viewers.[75] Based on his reading of the role of art in Plato's writings, Grabar argues that unless demonstrated otherwise a decorative motif is pleasurable, nothing more; to posit any significance warrants a rather high level of proof. I believe this may be a productive way of thinking about the Mozac centaurs.

As we have seen, the meanings medieval authors attributed to centaurs were multiple, perhaps even contradictory. This might give us pause in

---

[71] See the discussion in the Introduction.

[72] Schapiro, *Romanesque Art*, 19. See also the similar comments of Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, trans. Hugh Bredin (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 33–42.

[73] See, for example, Michael Greenlaugh, *Marble Past, Monumental Present: Building with Antiquities in the Medieval Mediterranean* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[74] Jacques Bousquet, "Copie et expansion de motifs dans la sculpture romane, la sirène aux centaures (à Saint-Gaudens et ailleurs)", *Revue de Comminges* 93 (1980): 563–79. This argument is similar to that of René Crozet, "Notes sur un chapiteau de Moutierneuf", *Bulletin de la Sociéré des Antiquaires de l'Ouest* 3rd ser., no. 12 (1939–41): 133–35. See also Bréhier, "Traits originaux".

[75] Grabar, *Mediation of Ornament*, 37.

FIG. 17. CENTAUR,
NAVE CAPITAL OF
SAINT-ANDOCHE,
SAULIEU

positing a specified meaning for the two Mozac centaurs, especially as they have such a generalized quality in their mode of representation. There are no inscriptions, no other figures or motifs that direct a reading of them. Rather, these figures, which were carved with such attention to detail, were probably conceived partly to inspire delight. We can perhaps identify two aspects of what specifically generated pleasure, or, in other words, what was deemed beautiful for medieval viewers beyond the tour-de-force technique of the centaurs' bodies.

The choice of centaurs signals value in the classical tradition, which could convey a sense of authority. This phenomenon has widely been described as a "twelfth-century Renaissance" in Europe, which can be witnessed in legal theory, philosophy, and history writing.[76] At Mozac, there are Romanesque carvings of nude atlantes and winged griffins, among many other motifs, that clearly are classicizing in their conception. The subtle articulation of the nude bodies of the former (fig. 18) shares much with the plastic conception of the centaurs' bodies, as well as some of the most sensitive nudes produces by twelfth-century artists. At Mozac, nudes, whether human or monstrous, feature placid expressions, energetic postures, and other common elements with much antique sculpture; there is nothing menacing in their articulation.

This brings us to a final point, more significant for the purposes of the present study. If we approach the Mozac centaurs from the aspect of aesthetics, it is somewhat remarkable that the body of a monster was deemed worthy of decorating the house of God. Indeed, the many examples of these creatures in carvings in churches from across Europe perhaps offer testimony to this widespread attitude, to an encompassing understanding of what could constitute a beautiful body. Winkelmann's exclusive attention to the human nude in antique sculpture, with which we began

---

[76] See the classic study of Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927). See, also, the collected studies in Robert Louis Benson and Giles Constable, eds, *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

this chapter, appears somewhat narrow in the selection of classical artworks that he deemed to be beautiful. The German based his account largely in terms of his observations of sculptured male bodies, with descriptions that are often tinged with a thinly veiled erotic desire. Though I would not deny such responses for medieval viewers, for present purposes it is remarkable that authors such as Bernard of Clairvaux conceived "monstrous centaurs" in relation to the concept of beauty; Winkelmann never entertained such a possibility. Twelfth-century notions of beauty included, among others, the authority of the classical tradition and the appreciation of technically accomplished carving, even for the body of a monster.

FIG. 18. ATLANTES, ST-PIERE, MOZAC

3 (IL)LEGIBILITY

> Silver spread into plates is brought from Tharsis, and gold
> from Ophaz: the work of the artificer, and the hand of the
> coppersmith: violet and purple is their clothing: all these things
> are the work of artificers.   Jeremiah 10:9

> It is not necessary to "read" the riddle. The pattern in itself is
> sufficient and it is beautiful.   H.D., *Helen in Egypt*

Metaphors of reading have long been applied to the interpretation of medieval sculpture. In his celebrated 1831 novel, *Notre Dame*, Victor Hugo described the sculptures adorning medieval churches in terms of writing, as having an intelligible message.[1] An enthusiastic student of medieval monuments, Hugo was constantly in contact with leading archaeologists, who often likened medieval images to language as well. Central to the approaches of Charles Cahiers, Adolphe Didron, and Charles Martin, among others, was the grounding of their interpretations of medieval art in texts, especially Biblical and exegetical.[2] Contemporary developments probably lent force to this interpretive model. The improvement in mass printing techniques over the course of the nineteenth century, accompanied by the tremendous expansion of a literate public, resulted in reading became increasingly naturalized as a human activity in Western Europe.[3] Yet the application of reading metaphors to the interpretation of Romanesque and Gothic sculpture was likewise more than a modern projection onto the past, for medieval authors made similar comparisons.[4] Gregory the Great (540–604) influentially defended

---

[1]   See the discussion in Camille, *Gargoyles of Notre-Dame*, 71–113.
[2]   Nayrolles, *L'invention de l'art roman*.
[3]   For reading technologies in nineteenth-century hermeneutics, see the overview of Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 70–123.
[4]   See the classic studies of Celia M. Chazelle, "Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles", *Word & Image* 6 (1990): 138–53; Lawrence G. Duggan, "Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate'?", *Word & Image* 5 (1989): 227–51.

religious art on the grounds that it functioned analogously to religious texts, especially for the illiterate, and thereby tacitly acknowledged that reading works of art is a profitable exercise that could advance religious understanding.

The church father was silent, however, on the precise mechanics of how images were to be read. This question, we are increasingly aware, is important because modes of reading texts vary dramatically from community to community.[5] The twenty-first-century reader, for example, is typically silent as he or she progresses through a text in a largely linear fashion. With respect to twelfth-century monks, Ivan Illich and Jean Leclerq, among others, have identified in their reading practices a pervasive engagement with the physicality of the text.[6] By repeatedly voicing and ruminating upon the individual syllables comprising words, monastic readers made a series of associative connections among similar words. It is worth noting in this regard that as Latin is an inflected language, puns and other phonic resemblances lie in syllabi, rather than with endings, as is the case with English.[7] This associative reading practice was more than self-indulgent, for medieval readers could uncover hidden meanings, often soteriological in character, based on phonic similarities among words. Presumably such modes of reading impinged upon how meaning itself was characterized and generated.

Art historians have increasingly recognized the complexities involved in "reading" art.[8] On the one hand, there is what Ernst Gombrich dubbed the "beholder's share", the host of factors that encroach upon the perception and interpretation of works of art.[9] Broadly speaking, these fall into two categories, biological and cultural. With respect to the former, recent findings of neurology have shed light into how the brain's hardwiring impinges upon the perception of visual stimuli.[10] Drawing on a broad range of recent scientific studies, Barbara Stafford has even argued that cognitive processes comprise the association of analogous images, an

[5]   For pioneering studies on social modes of reading in history, see Cathy Davidson, ed., *Reading in America: Literature and Social History* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

[6]   Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text*; Leclercq, *Love of Learning and Desire for God*.

[7]   Frederick Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).

[8]   Elizabeth Sears, "'Reading' Images", in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object*, ed. Elizabeth Sears and Thelma Thomas (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 1–7.

[9]   Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), 182–202.

[10]   See, for example, J.P. Changeux, "Art and Neuroscience", *Leonardo* 27 (1994): 189–201; David Freedberg and Victor Gallese, "Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience", *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11, no. 5 (2007): 197–203; J.A. Goguen, ed., "Art and the Brain", special edition of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6, nos 6–7 (1999); W. Neidich, *Blow-Up: Photography, Cinema, and the Brain* (New York: DAP, 2003); John Onians, *Neuroarthistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007). See also Freedberg, *Power of Images*.

FIG. 19. SACRIFICE OF CAIN AND ABEL, PRINCIPAL FACE OF CAPITAL FROM MOUTIER ST-JEAN

insight that she argues has profound implications.[11] For the study of art has the potential to offer fundamental insights into the very processes of how humans navigate the world with their minds.

Whereas biological aspects of perception are widely deemed to be universal, cultural factors, such as class, gender, and education have a contextual specificity. This phenomenon does nothing to diminish the profound impact of an individual's cultural position in the interpretation of images. Two influential arguments suffice to illustrate the complexities involved. Hans Robert Jauss argued that literature be conceived as a "dialogue between work and audience";[12] the expectations of audiences vary through history. Accordingly, works of art are understood in terms of a reader's horizons of expectations, which are historically and culturally contingent. In another vein, Laura Mulvey's notion of the "male gaze" has prompted substantial debates on whether differently gendered subjects engage images in different ways.[13] Accordingly, a woman might have a different position not because this is determined by her biology, but rather because of the way in which cultures constitute feminine subjects. For both Jauss and Mulvey, meaning largely lies in the cultural position, in the broad sense of the phrase, of a viewer or reader.

Consideration of the complex role that the viewer plays in the production of meaning need not deny that images structure their own reading. The possible readings of any given object are potentially limitless, but some readings are more compelling than others, particularly those that arise from sustained engagement with an object, delving into its particularities. Within the field of Romanesque Sculpture Studies, Meyer

---

[11] Barbara Stafford, *Visual Analogy: Consciousness as the Art of Connecting* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); Onians, *Neuroarthistory*.

[12] Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timonthy Bahti (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 19.

[13] See the classic study of Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 6–18. For a sustained application of the notion of the male gaze to the interpretation of medieval art, see Madeline H. Caviness, *Visualizing Women in the Middle Ages: Sight, Spectacle, and Scopic Economy* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 18–44.

Schapiro's astute and sensitive readings of the carvings of Moissac, Silos, and Souillac, to name but a few, endure as exemplary attempts to locate meaning in the articulations of forms, even if the historical framework he employed in his interpretations has been superseded by intervening generations of research.[14] Schapiro remained steadfast in his belief that works of art actively participate in the generation of meaning and that one can profitably speak of a semiotics peculiar to the visual arts that was intelligible to viewers outside the immediate context of production.

Drawing upon this insight, this chapter considers the problems of reading presented by two monsters on a capital from the Benedictine monastery of Moutiers-St-Jean (figs 19 and 20). I am particularly interested in how its inclusion of two monsters, out of keeping with the iconographic traditions from which its imagery draws, might guide, and possibly obstruct, the interpretation of its narrative imagery.[15] In a central position, often reserved for an altar in medieval scenes of the Sacrifice of Cain and Abel, a double-headed eagle cranes its neck toward each of the brothers, who approach from either side. Above this monster, the pronounced diagonal articulated by the *Dexter domini* unambiguously signals that Abel's sacrifice is acceptable, while the two-fold, symmetrical gaze of the eagle offers no discernible judgment on the events it witnesses. Arthur Kingsley Porter first posited that the double-headed eagle was probably a motif introduced to Burgundy via luxury goods from the eastern Mediterranean.[16] But the identification of an origin does not account for the motivations underlying the inclusion of this monster, a figure without parallel in the many medieval representations of this scene. Subsequent scholarship on the capital has tended to either reiterate Porter's thesis, or simply to overlook the interpretive problem posed by the eagle

---

[14]   See, for example, Thomas Crow, *The Intelligence of Art* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 1–23; Ilene Forsyth, "Narrative at Moissac: Schapiro's Legacy", *Gesta* 41 (2002): 71–94; Schapiro, *Romanesque Architectural Sculpture*, xxv–xxxvii.

[15]   Scholarly studies of this work are Pearl Braude, "'Cokkel in oure Clene Corn': Some Implications of Cain's Sacrifice", *Gesta* 7 (1968): 15–28; Jane Hayward and Walter Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection: Medieval Art from the Raymond Pitcairn Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), 81; Arthur Kingsley Porter, "Romanesque Capitals", *Fogg Art Museum Notes* (ed. Margaret E. Gilman), 1/2 (1922): 30; Kristin A. Mortimer, with contributions by William G. Klingelhofer, *Harvard University Art Museums: A Guide to the Collections* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Art Museums; New York: Abbeville, 1985), 122; Neil Stratford, "La sculpture médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean (Saint-Jeane-de Réome)", *Cahiers archéologique de France* 144 (1986): 169; idem, "Sculpture romane originaire de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", *Mémoires de la Commission des Antiquités du Départment de la Côte-d'Or* 32 (1980–81): 327; Linda Seidel, "Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections: IX: The William Hayes Fogg Art Museum: I: Burgundy", *Gesta* 11 (1972): no. 1b (rpt in Walter Cahn and Linda Seidel, *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections*, vol. 1: *New England Museums* [New York: Burt Franklin, 1979)], fig. 122); Christine Smith, *Before and After the End of Time: Architecture and the Year 1000* (New York: Harvard Design School, 2000), 38, 52.

[16]   Porter, "Romanesque Capitals", 30.

FIG. 20.
STRUGGLE
OF MAN AND
"LION", RIGHT
FACE OF CAPITAL
FROM MOUTIER
ST-JEAN

altogether. The second monster, on the right face of the capital, features within a composition that resembles Samson or David battling a lion (fig. 20). The juxtaposition of this capital's scenes of sacrifice and struggle struck Porter as "odd" and Neil Stratford as "enigmatic", without parallel in medieval art, though neither scholar expanded upon this judgment.[17]

In the lengthiest study of the capital to date, Pearl Braude suggested that a common moral theme, namely the triumph over evil, united these two scenes.[18] Key to this argument was the identification of the scene at right as Samson and the Lion, a story interpreted in medieval exegetical traditions as foreshadowing Christ's victory over evil. Linda Seidel, however, pointed to the unusual physiognomy of the "lion", which has a scaled belly, a feature that she argued renders the scene an analogue to the Old Testament story.[19] Severe damage to this beast makes its original appearance unknowable, but the artist appears to have combined parts from two different animals just as he conjoined two ostensibly unrelated scenes. Indeed, the semantic ambiguity of this "Samson" scene has parallels in several other contemporary carvings of lion fighters from across Europe, which do not clearly represent the Old Testament hero.[20]

The present chapter considers why the Moutiers sculptor both invoked and strayed from pictorial traditions associated with Cain and Abel and Samson and the Lion. Exegetical traditions and reading strategies of monks provide one framework with which to pursue this question, but I suggest that such a textually informed method cannot fully account for the carving's idiosyncratic imagery. In addition to adopting metaphors

---

[17]   The coupling of these two scenes struck Porter as odd: "Romanesque Capitals", 30. Stratford calls the pairing of these stories enigmatic: "La sculpture médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 169.
[18]   Braude, "Cain's Sacrifice", 20.
[19]   Seidel, "The William Hayes Fogg Art Museum", 64; rpt in *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections*, 130. Seidel compares this capital to a work illustrated in Carmen Gómez-Moreno, *Medieval Art from Private Collections* (New York: The Cloisters Museum, 1968), no. 24.
[20]   Kirk Ambrose, "Samson, David, or Hercules? Ambiguous Identities in some Romanesque Lion-Fighter Sculptures", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 62, no. 3 (2005): 131.

taken from the activities of reading and exegesis, with their connotations of legibility and intelligibility, I follow the lead of the contrariwise gaze of the eagle to consider an alternative scenario,[21] namely that the carving's various disjunctions perhaps aimed to sabotage or obstruct the reciprocal relationship between the visual narrative structure and the gears of the viewer's mental machinery. This image perhaps presents an instance of deliberately indecipherable writing in images. In other words, we might consider how the Moutiers monsters might generate meanings, as well as how they resist being subsumed under a system of signification.

In pursuing this twofold agenda, the following remarks focus on the monastic context of this work, which, given the scant archeological evidence, must be sketched in rather broad terms. The Benedictine community of Moutiers was located in northeastern Burgundy, in the Côte d'Or, before it was razed amidst the tumult associated with the Revolution. Along with twelve other capitals in the William Hayes Fogg Museum of Harvard University, as well as one capital in the Louvre and two in the village of St-Juste in Burgundy, the Cain capital originally adorned the interior piers of the abbey's church.[22] The dimensions of all these capitals correspond to the surviving fragments of the engaged columns of the church that survive, though the lack of detailed descriptions or pre-Revolutionary drawings of the church interior make it impossible to know where these works were precisely situated within this space.[23] Barring any new discovery, the specific liturgical or other topographic significance for these works must remain unknowable.

Before beginning the analysis of this capital, a few words on context are warranted. The history of the monastic community at Moutiers can be summarily drawn from relatively few sources. In the sixth century, Abbot Chunno of Réomé in Burgundy commissioned Jonas of Bobbio, who is best known for his biography of Columbanus, to write a life of the

---

[21]   Braude argues that, "the double-headed eagle could represent such an altar where Janus-like it invites the viewer to 'partake of the merits of Abel' by following his example, or through false doctrines and false tithing to choose the path of Cain", in "Cain's Sacrifice", 21.

[22]   For an inventory of sculptures, see Stratford, "La sculpture médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 164–74; idem, "Sculpture romane originaire de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 327–35. There is an additional capital in the Louvre, of smaller dimensions, which may have come from the church as well. On the purchase of the Fogg capitals, see Kathryn Brush, "The Capitals from Moutiers-Saint-Jean (Harvard University Art Museums) and the Carving of Medieval Art Study in America after World War I", in *Medieval Art and Architecture after the Middle Ages*, ed. Janet Marquardt and Alyce Jordan (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009). See also, more generally, Kathryn Brush, *Vastly More than Brick and Mortar: Reinventing the Fogg Art Museum in the 1920s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 54–56; Elizabeth Bradford Smith, *Medieval Art in America: Patters of Collecting 1800–1940* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 176.

[23]   Stratford, "La sculptre médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 160–61.

monastery's founder and patron saint, John.[24] A fourth-century patrician born in Courtagny, John left an ascetic community near Réomé to pursue the religious life at the important monastic island of Lérins, off the southern coast of France. At the command of the bishop of Langres, John returned to Réomé with a company of disciples to establish a community that observed the rule of Macarius. Sometime around the year 800 the community adopted the rule of Benedict.[25] The tireless monastic reformer, William of Volpiano, reformed the community's observances sometime between 990 and 1003.[26] Lay donors appear to have been impressed with the results of these reforms, as signaled by the many donations in the following decades. By the twelfth century, the monastery counted among its holdings numerous dependencies, including Rougemont, Puits d'Orbe, and St-Magnance.[27]

With respect to the building history of the monastery, Abbot Bernard II (1099–1133) initiated a campaign for a magnificent church for the Moutiers community.[28] It was almost certainly under him, or perhaps his successor, Peter (1139–1179), that the Cain capital dates. Little is known about either of these abbots or their administrations because a fire destroyed most of the institution's records.

A precious survival from the Moutiers scriptorium is a c. 1000 copy of the *vita* of the patron saint. This manuscript includes decorative initials featuring "creative" zoomorphs, suggesting that monsters featured relatively prominently in the imaginary of this community.[29] A monster likewise

[24]   Jonas of Bobbio, "*Vita Iohannis*", in *Ionae vitae Columbani, Vedestas, Iohannis*, MGH scriptores rerum Merovingicarum 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1896), 502–17. See also J. Marilier, "Les origines de l'abbaye de Moutiers-Saint Jean", *Bulletin de la Société Historique ed Archéologique de Langres* 13 (1963): 375–79. See the overview of surviving sources in A. Vittenet, *L'abbaye de Moutier-Saint-Jean (Cote-D'Or): Essai Historique* (Mâcon: Protat Frères, 1938), xiii–xxvii; Stratford, "La sculpte médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 158–59; Ian Wood, "A Prelude to Columbanus: The Monastic Achievement in the Burgundian Territories", in *Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism*, ed. H.B. Clarke and Mary Brennan (Oxford: B.A.R., 1981), 5–8.

[25]   Marilier argues that the monastic community moved locations, from Réomé to Moutiers; "Les origins", 16. Others see the location as remaining as the same founded by John; see, for example, Friedrich Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich: Kultur und Gesellschaft in Gallien, den Rehinlanden und Bayern am Beishpiel der monastichen Entwicklung (4. Bis 8. Jahrhundert)* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1965), 61.

[26]   Niethard Bulst, *Untersuchungen zu den klosterreformen Wilhlems von Dijon (962–1031)* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrschied, 1973), 61–65.

[27]   See Vittenet, *Moutier-Saint-Jean*, 21–34.

[28]   Stratford, "La sculptre médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", 159; Vittenet, *Moutier-Saint-Jean*, 101–12.

[29]   Semur-en-Auxois, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 001. Daniel Russo describes the monstrous forms of its initials as follows: "Les formes enroulèes autour des corps des lettres, les taches de couleurs, et les lettres animales, tout participe du míme effort permanent de crèativitè, sur les bords du texte règlè, parfois aussi contre le texte, quand il y a empiëtement sur le signe ècrit, gíne pour sa lecture, remise en question des principes de composition du Feuillet", in ''Étude sur le manuscrit 1 de la Bibliothèque municipale de Semur-en-Auxois: enluminure de manuscrit et rèforme monastique", *Bulletin du centre d'études mèdièvales d'Auxerre* 10 (2006): n.p.

features prominently in the text of the saint's vita. Shortly after returning to his native land, John comes to the aid of a village that was menaced by a basilisk that had poisoned its well. The monk vanquished the monster by descending into its lair and invoking the name of God. From that day on the well was renowned for its sweet waters. This miraculous transformation involves many ritualistic elements, including the invocation of the divine by a cleric and the purification of water. Within this economy, the monster embodies a pollution that can only be removed by John's quasi-liturgical action.[30]

GLOSSING

I begin with the scenario that the bicephalic capital of the Moutiers capital contributes to the meaning of this work, offering something akin to a (negative) gloss to the adjacent scenes of sacrifice. This creature seems more than an ornamental accretion to the Biblical narrative, for its handling differs from that of the decorative motifs employed on other capitals from Moutiers. On these works, motifs, such as a fleur-de-lis, repeat along the abacus and are separated from the remainder of the capital basket by a fillet. This visual demarcation serves to distinguish between decorative and historiated elements of the carving. By contrast, the singular and prominent presence of the double-headed eagle features squarely within a narrative.

  Bicephalic eagles have a long history in Eurasian art. In the second millennium before the Common Era, Old Syrian seals and reliefs featured double-headed eagles, perhaps a symbol of the god Ninurta.[31] Similar imagery endured in subsequent kingdoms in the eastern Mediterranean, including Armenian royal eagles from between the third and ninth centuries CE. The Roman imperial eagle was consistently single-headed, but in 1057 the emperor Isaac Komnenos adopted the two-headed eagle, probably to indicate his dual power over church and state. Use of this imagery continued until the end of Byzantium, as attested by a relief at Mystras marking the coronation spot of the last emperor, as well as in imperial dress. At roughly the same time, the Seljuk Turks (1058–1226) introduced double-headed eagles as emblems of their rule and their patronage, as in a relief from the mosque and hospital complex at Dvigri. Luxury objects, including silks from the eastern Mediterranean, on which double-headed eagles featured, were highly valued in the West and many examples survive. The Holy Roman Emperors eventually came to use the

---

[30] For further discussion of the notion of ritual purity, see Chapter 4.
[31] Joan Aruz, Kim Benzel and Jean M. Evans, eds, *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 228.

bicepahlic eagle in their heraldry under Frederick II, but the earliest image of which I am aware appears in Matthew Paris's 1250 great chronicle.[32]

Two-headed eagles are rather unusual in Romanesque sculpture and most examples appear to serve a largely ornamental function. The abacus of a capital on the south aisle of the cloister at Moissac, for example, features a series of double-headed eagles in a row, perhaps a playful response to the capital below, which features birds entwined in dense coils of vegetation.[33] Similarly, the archivolts of the west façade at Vouvray contain a number of fantastical creatures, including a bicephalic eagle, which serve to enhance the visual sumptuousness of the portal, without any clear symbolic import. These, as well as other Romanesque examples of the motif,[34] probably invoke the ornamental vocabulary from the arts of the eastern Mediterranean, with their associations of richness that would be appropriate for the decoration of a church, erected in honor of God. One might read the Moutiers eagle along similar lines, but this does little to explain its jarring presence at the center of the Cain narrative.

This radical interpolation can be understood in terms of Harold Bloom's notion of the tessera, adopted from the psychoanalytic writings of Jacques Lacan. Bloom identifies six "revisionary ratios" or ways in which poets position themselves in relation to past authors. Most of these ratios are characterized by an anxiety of influence that for Bloom permeates modern literature and can lead a writer to obfuscate her sources in an effort to assert her originality. The ratio of the tessera is exceptional in this regard, for this writing strategy overtly positions itself with past traditions.

> [a tessera] is a completion and antithesis; I take the word not from mosaic-making, where it is still used, but from the ancient mystery cults, where it meant a token of recognition, the fragment say of a small pot which with the other fragments would re-constitute the vessel. A poet antithetically "completes" his precursor, by so reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough.[35]

Such a notion has use for the study of medieval visual arts, in which the evocation of the authority of tradition often plays a prominent role.

---

[32]   Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the* Chronica Majora (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 268–69. See also the discussion of eagles in Percy Ernst Schramm and Florentina Mütherrich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser: Ein Beitrag zur Herrschergeschichte von Karl dem Großen bis Friedrich II. 768–1250* (Munich: Prestel, 1962), 59–60.

[33]   Illustrated in Thorsten Droste*, Die Skulpturen von Moissac: Gestalt und Funktion romanischer Bauplastik* (Munich: Hirmer, 1996), 73. Droste (p. 68) links the double-headed eagle to heraldry, as well as Byzantine and Islamic art.

[34]   Other examples can be found on a pilaster of the façade at Civray and on a capital in Vienne.

[35]   Bloom, *Anxiety of Influence*, 14.

From a Christian perspective, the representational strategy of the tessera would be particularly suited to the retelling of an Old Testament narrative. Since the earliest days of the faith, a primary task of theologians was to position the Gospels and letters of Paul and other disciples in relationship to received Hebrew texts.[36] Ignoring this task was not practicable because Christ, as well as his followers, repeatedly quoted from Hebrew texts. This theological concern for articulating the relationship between Old and New endured, and can be found in the writings of many twelfth-century monks in Burgundy, perhaps most polemically and influentially in Peter the Venerable's *Adversus Iudaeos*.[37] The former prior of Vézelay and abbot of Cluny repeatedly condemns Jews for the inadequacy of their legalistic interpretive models, supplanted by the spiritual hermeneutics of, most notably, Christ and Paul. In this way Peter conforms to the strategy of many medieval exegetes to position Christianity as more advanced than Judaism, as superseding the mores of the Old Order.[38] Accordingly, Christian authors completed Jewish texts, but did not supplant them.

If not widely informed by a readily discernible anti-Jewish rhetoric, the decorative schemes of twelfth-century churches throughout Burgundy show a preoccupation with the stories of the Old Testament. Narrative sculptures in this region draw their themes largely from the Old Testament, far outnumbering examples of stories from the Gospels or saints' lives. These narrative works largely conform to medieval iconographic conventions, making it difficult to detect distinctively twelfth-century attitudes toward these subject matters. For this reason, the Moutiers capital is interesting in that aspects of its imagery can be seen to foster a negative reading. Braude persuasively linked the presence of weeds nestled in Cain's offering, highlighted by the inscribed "CAIM [*sic*] CUM LOLIO" ("Cain with weeds") above, to medieval polemics condemning Jews and heretics.[39] Augustine, for one, had influentially compared Cain to the Jews in his tract against the Manicheans and the Faustians.[40] Among other claims, Augustine suggested that just as Cain's sacrifice had been rejected, Old Testament ritual observances have no purchase under the New Covenant; both Cain and the Jews were cursed.

Other aspects of the capital can be read as negative glosses. The lower left corner of the left side of the capital (fig. 21) features a fruit that has fallen from the tree above. The notion of a fall finds affinity in the adjacent flailing

[36]   See the classic remarks of Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), 1–36.

[37]   Peter the Venerable, *Adversus Iudaeos*, ed. Yvonne Friedman (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985).

[38]   Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 1–44.

[39]   Braude, "Cain's Sacrifice", 15–16.

[40]   See also Ruth Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981), 93.

feet and drapery of Abel, echoed by those of Cain on the opposite face of the capital. Despite resemblances in posture and dress, however, these young men are visually placed in oppositional terms by the fact that the clean-shaven figure of Abel features an elaborately decorated halo, absent from the bearded Cain. The inscription above is likewise positive: "ABEL CUM PRIMICIIS" ("Abel with his firstlings"), in comparison to the negative inscription above Cain.

The double-headed eagle can be read in similarly negative terms. Its monstrous presence in the position typically reserved for an altar in medieval iconography of this scene perhaps signals the otherness of blood sacrifices, obviated for Christians by the Crucifixion. The specific articulation of such an idea may have been informed by knowledge of Roman altars, which sometimes feature eagles, including an example from an ancient synagogue in Sardis. I am unaware of an ancient altar that features a double-headed eagle, but the medieval sculptor may have emphasized his moralizing point by rendering the eagle monstrous through the addition of a second head, for Romanesque sculptors often carved animals as bicorporates or bicephalics, even tricephalics, as a way to make them monstrous.[41] What is more, sculptors in Burgundy occasionally took pains to situate Christian and Pagan or Jewish rituals in terms of one another, as on a portal at Charlieu that includes a tympanum of the Last Supper. This carving of the originary moment for the Mass, a ritual performed within the walls of the church, sits atop a lintel that features an Old Testament or Pagan blood sacrifice.[42] There is an obvious Christian triumphalism in the physical positioning that resembles the logic of many Gothic facades, which position Christian themes literally, and by extension figuratively, above Old Testament prophets and kings.

---

[41] Masuyo Tokita Darling, "A Sculptural Fragment of Cluny III and the Three-Headed Bird Iconography", in *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1997), 209–23.

[42] A similar logic may have informed the Pentecost tympanum of Vézelay, which rests upon a lintel in which an oxen appears to be led toward slaughter.

Sacrifice stands as the central theme on another capital from Moutiers, also in the Fogg Museum, that represents the Annunciation to Zachariah (fig. 22). The custodian of the altar in the Temple swings a censor over the altar as he learns that his wife would give birth to John the Baptist.[43] Viewed against the monstrous presence in the sacrifice of Cain, this imagery would likely prompted viewers to consider the relationship of the Mass to Old Testament rituals, lending a historical depth to the Mass, which was allegorized in historical terms by many medieval theologians in France.[44] Indeed, the theme of prophecy inheres to the figure of John the Baptist, the voice in the wilderness who announced the arrival of Christ, the Lamb of God, and suffered martyrdom, the ultimate sacrifice, when Salomé requested his head from King Herod.

FIG. 22. ANNUNCIATION TO ZACCARIAS, PRINCIPAL FACE OF CAPITAL FROM MOUTIER ST-JEAN

Other readings of the Moutiers eagle are possible. First, because two-headed eagles were a motif of Eastern silks, the Moutier creature might synecdochically suggest an altar cloth. In his extremely influential allegorization of the Mass, the ninth-century theologian Amalarius of Metz argued that the altar cloth was a symbol of the soul's purity.[45] The altar embodies the mysteries of Christ, and stands as the site of burnt offerings in reference to the individual's own sacrifice.[46] The associations of eagles with flight and apotheosis further suggest the heavenward motion of the soul.[47] The capital's double-headed eagle perhaps underscores similar notions of sacrifice and salvation that lie at the heart of Christian doctrine.

---

[43] The vine at the base of the altar in the Zacchariah scene perhaps casts the episode in typological terms. Not yet bearing fruit, the vines anticipate the coming wine of the Eucharist. It likewise resembles the vine that features in Tree of Jesse imagery, culminating in the figure of Christ. Regardless, there seems to have been an association between vines and altars, such as that which surround the busts of Christ and the apostles on Gilduinus' altar at St-Sernin, Toulouse.

[44] See the overview in Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, 2 vols, trans. Francis A. Brunner (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1992), 1: 87–92.

[45] Amalarius of Metz, *De ecclesiastici officiis*, 3:18 (PL 105, 1126); cited by Jungman, *Mass*, 1: 91.

[46] Ibid., 3;26 (PL 105, 1145); cited by Jungman, *Mass*, 1: 91.

[47] Eagles feature on a cloister capital from Moissac that may feature the apotheosis of

Second, there existed a strong geographic component to medieval teratology, locating monsters at the far reaches of the earth, in places like Ethiopia or India.[48] Accordingly, the Moutiers eagle might function as something akin to a place marker, situating the sacrifice narrative in the eastern Mediterranean. Such a geographic gesture might be read in the wake of the tumultuous events of the eleventh century, including the first crusade and the official break between the Eastern and Western churches, as something akin to a negative gloss of the Cain and Abel narrative through the introduction of a motif associated with the Seljuk and Byzantine empires.

Theological divisions between the Eastern and Western Churches seem to have been on the mind of the designers of sculptural programs in Burgundy in the first half of the twelfth century. Meyer Schapiro first identified in the rather idiosyncratic presence of Christ in the Pentecost tympanum of Vézelay (fig. 8), an avowal of the West's position on the *filioque* debate, which centered on the interpretation of this phrase from the Nicene Creed.[49] The question centered on was whether or not the Holy Spirit issued from the Son, as well as from the Father, to enable the apostles to speak in tongues. The Eastern Church read the Greek version of this phrase as denying Jesus's presence at the event, while the West read the Latin in contrary fashion and occasionally included the son in images of the Pentecost to assert their interpretation.

For present purposes, it is further significant that this theological message of the Vézelay tympanum is framed by monsters. The archivolts and lintel of this sculpture feature dog-headed creatures, or cynocephalics, of India, the large-eared Panotii, and other figures that ultimately derive from Classical sources, especially Pliny. Yet, it remains unclear how to read these creatures in relationship to the adjacent scene of the Pentecost.[50] Along Augustinian lines, these creatures have the potential to be converted to Christianity.[51] Accordingly, the tympanum offers the promise of universal salvation, which can extend to those who are not fully human. Alternatively, Ambrose and the anonymous author of the poem *Beowulf*, among others, suggest that the monstrosity of these creatures index the fallen state of their common ancestor, Cain.[52] Viewed from this

Alexander (Droste, *Moissac*, 129). For symbolism of eagles in Burgundian sculpture see also Angheben, *Chapiteaux romans de Bourgogne*, 85–95.

[48] Wittkower, "Marvels of the East".

[49] Meyer Schapiro, *Parma Ildefonsus: A Romanesque Illuminated Manuscript from Cluny and Related Works* (New York: College Art Association, 1964), 43.

[50] See, for example, Katzenellenbogen, "Central Tympanum at Vézelay"; Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews*, 50–59. Although Katzenellenbogen tends to regard these creatures in terms of the xenophobia accompanying the crusades, Strickland rightly notes in her discussion that the monsters can be read as either embodying virtues or vices. See also the discussion in Ambrose, *Nave Sculpture of Vézelay*, 28–33.

[51] See the discussion of this tradition in Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 59–86.

[52] Ambrose of Milan, *De Cain et Abel*, PL 14, 317. This view has later echoes, including

perspective, the monsters surrounding Christ and the disciples take on a menacing aspect. Nothing within the sculpture resolves this interpretive conundrum.[53]

Similarly, it is unclear what precisely the Moutiers eagle signifies. Does its very monstrosity offer, say, a negative gloss on Jewish sacrifice, represented in the figure of Cain? Or, through its potential allusions to ecclesiastical ornaments, does it foster typological, soteriological, or geographic associations that are not necessarily negative? The carving's underdetermined quality lets these questions remain open. Indeed, this very ambiguity may have been deemed desirable by the capital's designer.

ARTIFICE AND ENIGMA

In a discussion of the acanthus borders of Carolingian ivories, Jean-Claude Bonne points out that ornamental motifs have the potential for meaning, but typically lack precision in their articulation that lends semantic specificity.[54] As the various potential meanings of the bicephalic eagle at Moutiers just explored suggest, there is a similarly indeterminate meaning to the motif that may stem from the fact that it was a staple in the decorative arts of the eastern Mediterranean. It is possible to locate meanings in this monster that gloss the Old Testament scene, but any effort to specify that meaning on the part of the twenty-first-century historian must not overshadow the remarkable gesture of placing a monster in the Cain and Abel story. There is no precedent for this radical decision, which in large part remains illegible because of its very singularity.

Perhaps an even greater departure from convention characterizes the second monster of this capital, the lion with scales that wrestles with a man. To my knowledge there are no obvious parallels to this morphology in medieval art from the West. It is perhaps closest in form to qilin that appear in Chinese and Japanese art, including on silks. Knowledge of such imaginary creatures might have been transmitted via trade with the East, but identification of origins does nothing to explain the ways in which such a monstrous presence obfuscates the meaning of this scene. Carvings of combat between men and lions feature at sites across Western Europe, and I have argued elsewhere that it can be difficult to determine in certain cases whether Samson, David, Hercules, or some other figure was intended.[55] There are variations among the many examples of lion

in *Beowulf* (ll. 102–14) (ed. Daniel Donoghue, trans. Seamus Heaney [New York: Norton, 2002]), which describes Grendel as a descendent of Cain.

[53] It may be that painted inscriptions, traces of which can still be observed on the tympanum, offered a more pointed interpretation of these creatures. Unfortunately, because of their fragmentary state, these inscriptions must remain undecipherable.

[54] Jean-Claude Bonne, "Les ornements de l'histoire (à propos de l'ivoire carolingien de saint Remi)", *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 51, no. 1 (1996): 69. See also Gombrich, *Sense of Order*, 217–25.

[55] Ambrose, "Samson, David, or Hercules".

fighters, such as the length of hair or the inclusion or absence of a belt on the human figure, but the rendering of the lion's body tends to be rather consistent, conforming to medieval conventions for representing this animal. The belly scales of the Moutiers "lion" are without pictorial parallel in Romanesque scenes of lion fighters, thereby hindering any attempt to link this scene with a specific narrative. It is to a consideration of precisely this ability of monsters to obfuscate significance that I now turn.

The use of double-headed eagles and, perhaps, of monstrous lions in luxury goods serves to embellish a carving that decorated the House of God, while simultaneously drawing attention to its own artifice. Accordingly, this work manifests a self-consciousness, an early European example of what Victor Stoichita in another context has dubbed a "self-aware image".[56] The capital's salient aberrations from iconographic conventions draw attention to the activity of the sculptor, signaling that its scenes are merely representations.

Aspects of the carving technique similarly invoke a tension between verisimilitude and historicity, on the one hand, and repetitive patterning and abstraction, on the other. The careful articulation of the locks of wool on the sacrificial lamb or the exacting rendering of the shafts and vanes on each of the eagle's feathers gestures toward a naturalism at odds with the abstraction of their patterned arrangement. The lithic passages of the human faces, especially Abel's, assert the materiality of the carving,[57] while the fantastically arranged drapery folds palpably signal that these figures are abstractions from nature and history. But it is the presence of the two-headed eagle that is perhaps most jarring because it is so clearly out of place within the Biblical story.

Early on, medieval philosophers recognized the constructedness or artificiality of human signifying systems.[58] Augustine's sign theory, which circulated widely in the medieval West, was an attempt to come to terms with, and perhaps transcend, the confines of language, a human construction. His widely read *De Doctrina Chistiana* argued that the "literary aesthetic" of the Bible, characterized by obscure images, forced the reader to seek out philosophical abstractions.[59] Elsewhere in this text, Augustine argued that difficulties of reading scripture pointed to the frailties of human communication, which likewise inspired desire for the divine:

---

[56] Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*.
[57] Kessler compellingly argues that the stress on materiality in medieval art contributes to its sense of artificiality; Herbert Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art* (Orchard Park, NY: Broadview, 2004), 20.
[58] Williams, *Deformed Discourse*.
[59] See, for example, D.W. Robertson, *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962).

> For the feeding and fanning of that ardent love by which, under
> a law like that of gravitation, we are borne upwards or inwards
> to rest, the presentation of truth by emblems has a great power:
> for, thus presented, things move and kindle our affection much
> more than if they were set forth in bald statements, not clothed
> with sacramental symbols. Why this should be, it is hard to say;
> but it is the fact that anything which we are taught by allegory
> or emblem affects and pleases us more, and is more highly
> esteemed by us, than it would be if most clearly stated in plain
> terms. I believe that the emotions are less easily kindled while
> the soul is wholly involved in earthly things; but if it be brought
> to those corporeal things which are emblems of spiritual things,
> and then taken from these to the spiritual realities which they
> represent, it gathers strength by the mere act of passing from
> the one to the other, and, like the flame of a lighted torch, is
> made by the motion to burn more brightly, and is carried away
> to rest by a more intensely glowing love.[60]

There is evidence that many twelfth-century monks would have
sympathized with such views. As noted earlier, the textual record associated
with Moutiers-St-Jean is slim and sheds little light on the intellectual
culture of the institution. *Faute de mieux*, I turn to the sermons of Julian
of Vézelay, written in the 1160s at a Benedictine institution not far from
Moutiers and among the few monastic collections from the twelfth-
century to have been edited. Julian repeatedly rues the frailties of human
forms of communication and held a less optimistic view of the problems of
interpreting obscure passages than Augustine. At the outset of his sermon
on the Pentecost, the monk laments the inescapable fact that he must rely
on language, which as manmade is necessarily unreliable, to communicate
matters of the spirit.

> A man wishing to speak to others about the knowledge of God,
> namely the Holy Trinity, struggles with the mind, he is unable
> to find the right words to say that which is ineffable. Therefore,
> he translates to our poor words, which were created to please
> and be convenient to men to designate the creatures, their
> actions, as well as their passions.[61]

In a sermon celebrating the moment that the Spirit supposedly overcame
the limitations of human speech, Julian paradoxically foregrounds his belief

---

[60]   Augustine, *Letter 55*; http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1102055.htm (consulted 23
February 2012).
[61]   "Volens homo ad aliorum eruditionem quae de Deo suo, sancta uidelicet Trinitate,
mente conceperat, loqui uerva propria quibus illud indicibilie diceret non inuenit.
Transtulit igitur se ad uervula paupertatis nostrae quae ad placitum convenientiamque
hominum inuenta, creaturis earumque actionibus uel passionibus designandis imposita
sunt", in *Sermons*, ed. Vorreux, 1: 252. For this theme in Cluniac circles, see Ambrose,
Nave Sculpture of Vézelay, 31–32.

FIG. 23. LUXURIA,
FIGURE ON
PORCH OF
MOISSAC

that any attempt to convey spiritual things must be expressed in terms of
human language necessitates a translation. Such a move invariably results
in impoverishments and misunderstandings.

Julian likewise addressed the epistemology of vision at several points in
his sermons. An imaginative engagement with the story of Epiphany, for
example, tracks the vision of the Magi from mundane to spiritual seeing.[62]
This theme preoccupied medieval thinkers, including Hugh of St Victor

---

[62]   Julian of Vézelay, *Sermons*, ed., Vorreux, 1: 82–84. See the discussion of this sermon in
Ambrose, *Nave Sculpture of Vézelay*, 34–37.

and Abbot Suger of St Denis.[63] Even so, Julian occasionally expressed doubts about the potential of the sense of sight to transcend its corporeal nature, most explicitly in a sermon that takes as its prompt Christ's injunction in Mark 13:33 to "Take ye heed, watch and pray."[64] The Douay-Reims phraseology obscures the fact that Jerome's translation used the imperative *videte*, more literally translated as "see" or "witness". Following in the footsteps of Augustine, Julian takes this verse as a starting point for reflections on the limitations of corporeal vision. The monk ponders how the faithful can attain spiritual vision, and he describes the plight of the pious soul as follows:

> *How can she* [the soul] *understand the mysteries of God, by the things that are made*, who is surfeited and overwhelmed by the fantasies of corporeal things, which only the wealthy desire to accumulate …?[65]

The first phrase paraphrases Paul's frustrated desire to witness invisible truths, as voiced in Romans 1:20. But in his exegesis, Julian casts material objects as the principal obstacle to spiritual seeing, *rerum corporealum fantasiis*.

Thomas Dale has fruitfully analyzed *fantasia* at length within the context of medieval discussions of vision, ultimately arguing that Romanesque sculptures allowed monks to purge sinful desires from the mind.[66] He points to a celebrated relief on the porch of St-Pierre, Moissac, that features the personification of lust (*luxuria*) attacked by serpents and toads (fig. 23). Dale suggests that this sculpture employs a strategy of inversion: the corporeality evoked by the salient articulation of forms in this carving prompted strong visions in the monastic viewer that aimed at turning his attention toward the contemplation of spiritual matters.[67] By contrast, Julian uses *fantasia* less in terms of the mechanics of the mind's eye than to signal the inscrutability of material objects, especially with respect to spiritual vision. In other words, the monk understands *fantasia* in ontological terms, and not in terms of epistemology or of theories of vision or of the mind.

Julian's desire to highlight the poverty and deceptions of "corporeal fantasies" may seem counterintuitive coming from a monk who lived in one of the most expensively decorated monasteries in northern Europe. Julian

---

[63] See, for example, Herbert L. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 190–205; Conrad Rudolph, *Artistic Change at St-Denis: Abbot Suger's Program and the Early Twelfth-Century Controversy over Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 32–63.

[64] Julian of Vézelay, *Sermons*, ed. Vorreux, 2: 618–47.

[65] *Quomodo per ea quae facta sunt inuisibilia Dei intellecta conspiciet*, plena et scaturiens rerum corporalium fantasiis, dum cumulandis pecuniis inhiat, et parties rebus considerandis inuigilat?", in Ibid., 2: 628.

[66] Dale, "The Nude at Moissac". See idem, "Phantasms"; Rudolph, *Moralia in Job*, 36.

[67] For a similar point concerning this relief, see also Forsyth, "Narrative at Moissac".

had something of an ascetic streak, criticizing the pomp of marble floors and painted ceilings in palaces.[68] Although he did not launch a similar invective against church decoration, the monk's sermons repeatedly voice profound anxiety over the enormous wealth that his community enjoyed, at odds with the vow of poverty central to the monastic vocation.[69] More seems to be at stake for the monk than anxiety over the earthly riches of his community, for he voices concern that "corporeal fantasies" obscure the individual's vision of the divine, a central desire in the pursuit of the religious life. Elsewhere in his nineteenth sermon, the monk builds on a *topos*, particularly current among Ottonian theologians, that likens the soul to Zacchaeus, whose view of Christ's entry into Jerusalem was obscured by a crowd, a metaphor of physical things.[70] Only by ascending the sycamore tree, an action interpreted as jettisoning all worldly goods, could Zacchaeus see God. In addition to resonances with *adventus* ceremonies, this theological tradition probably informed the many Ottonian miniatures of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

An important precursor to Julian's phraseology concerning corporeal vision is found in a passage from one of Gregory the Great's most famous letters, addressed to Theoctiste, sister of the Byzantine Emperor, Maurice.[71] The future pope casts his choice of the religious life as a series of moves from the material to the immaterial and from the external to the internal. Among these is the rejection of all corporeal phantasms (*cuncta fantasmata corporum*) from the mind's eye in order to see the incorporeal joy on high.[72] In distinction to Julian's use of soul (*anima*), mind (*mens*) and heart (*cor*) feature prominently in Gregory's interior landscape.

A number of post-patristic writers likewise employed phraseology similar to Julian's to emphasize the mundane barriers to the ascent of the spirit, including John Scotus Eriugenia, Gilbert of Holland, and Raymond of Lille. The thirteenth-century Cistercian Thomas of Radolio's *Vita Petri abbatis* recounts the tale of a deceased monk who appears in the chapterhouse and bemoans that as a captive in purgatory he has yet to see God.[73] Interestingly, the plight of this deceased monk is framed in terms of the limitations of sculpture and painting, which display the misericord of God only according to human will. Thomas's language borrows heavily from Acts 17, in which Paul warns the Athenians that "we must not suppose

---

[68]   Julian of Vézelay, *Sermons*, ed. Vorreux, 2: 454.

[69]   John F. Romano, "Julian of Vézelay, A Twelfth-Century Critic of his Monastery's Worldly Success", *Medieval Sermon Studies* 50 (2006): 51–69.

[70]   Henry Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian Book Illumination: An Historical Study*, 2 vols (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1: 119–25.

[71]   Gregory the Great, *Registre des lettres*, ed. P. Minard et al. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991), 1: 78.

[72]   "cuncta fantasmata corporum ab oculis mentis abigere et superna gaudia incorporaliter uidere", in Ibid., 1: 78.

[73]   Thomas of Radolio, *Vita Petri Abbatis* 17 (PL 209, cols. 1023–24). I thank Herbert Kessler for drawing my attention to this source.

the divinity to be like unto gold, or silver, or stone, the graving of art and device of man". Thomas develops this imagery by exhorting his fellow monks to purify themselves of material desires, just as gold and silver are purified in the furnace.[74] Thomas speaks of the spirit (*anima*) bound to the "fantasies of things" (*fantasiis rerum*). Only after these are abandoned can the soul witness the incorporeal light of reason (*lux incorporeal rationis*). Similarly, the prologue to the early thirteenth-century *Pictor in Carmine*, authored by an anonymous Cistercian monk, bemoans the gadgets of fantasy (*fantasmatum ludibria*) in church decoration, including images of two-headed eagles, chimeras, apes, and centaurs, and enjoined a sober and rational presentation of church stories.[75] A similar anxiety over the potential distractions posed by fantastic creatures and other artistic flights of fancy disturbed Bernard of Clairvaux two generations earlier, as discussed in the previous chapter. It bears noting for our purposes that Bernard highlights the vanity of lavishly decorated buildings as well.

> O caro cara nimis circumflua rebus optimis,
> Ad breue sublimis tumuli donaberis imis.
> Pensa non quod habes sed idem quod es, o caro, tabes.
> Vestis ere trabes fuluo, labens homo, labes.
>
> O dear flesh much surrounded by rich goods, exalted for a short time, you will be placed in the depths of a tomb. O flesh, do not consider only what you have, but also what you are: corruption! You adorn the beams of your house with tawny bronze, but, Falling Man, you will fall.[76]

The criticisms of Cistercian authors, typically hostile to worldly ornaments, might be dismissed as having little to offer for the interpretation of art in traditional Benedictine monasteries. But I would argue that the sermons of Julian offer evidence that the inadequacy of material signs was a widespread concern. Indeed, Julian's doubts, articulated in sermons within a house that was an important priory of Cluny, suggest that the debates about the role of the visual arts might not be so neatly drawn between iconophilic Clunaics and iconophobic Cistercians. The positions on either side of the debate about the appropriate role of arts in the religious life might have been more nuanced than is evident in legislation on images by the Cistercians or in debates between Cistercians and Cluniacs. Even

---

[74] For smelting metaphors in Resurrection theology, see Dale, "Rudolf von Schwaben", 729.

[75] "fantasmatum ludibria paulatim introduxit pictorum nefanda presumption", in *Pictor in Carmine: Ein Handbuch der Typologie aus der Zeit um 1200 nach MS 300 des Corpus Christi College in Cambridge*, ed. Karl-August Wirth (Berlin: Mann, 2006), 110 (fol. 1v).

[76] Bernard of Cluny, *De octo vitiis*. In *Bernardi Cluniacensis carmina de trinitate et de fide catholica, De castitate servanda, In libros regum, De octo vitiis*, ed. Katarina Halvarson (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1963), 97–138; English translation by Ronald E. Pepin, "De octo vitiis: A Satire by Bernard of Cluny", *Allegorica* 18 (1997): 31–99, at 36–37.

FIG. 24. GRIFFIN
WITH BOAT,
NAVE CAPITAL
OF CHANTEUGES

patrons of the arts could be self-critical.

To be sure, many twelfth-century authors embraced Augustinian notions of the sign, manifest in terms like *integumentum* and *involucrum* and optimistically imagined the world in terms of a book, which could be read to discover immutable spiritual insights. But Julian did not consistently share in that optimism as he confronted limitations inherent in material signs, and engaged the problems that the materiality of signs posed for spiritual understandings. A similar awareness, or even frustration, of the limitations of the material and temporal probably informed his understanding of "corporeal fantasies". Julian's musings on the limitations of human communication systems conform to wider trends of an increasingly "self-conscious" use of metaphor and symbol in twelfth-century theology.[77]

Traces of this concern can be found elsewhere in twelfth-century art. Herbert Kessler, for one, has recently documented the history of the *Nec Deus nec homo* (*neither God nor man*) titulus that often accompanied images of the Christ from the twelfth century onward.[78] Around 1096 Baldric of Dol penned the first known example of this distich, which would come to accompany images of Christ across Europe. Kessler argued that this distills medieval image theory, for the image of Christ is not either god or man, but rather addresses a fundamental paradox central to the doctrine of Incarnation: the immutable and transcendent encapsulated in the material and contingent. This paradox is ultimately irresolvable,

[77] "The 'theology' of the twelfth century was saturated with metaphor and symbol; and in these it found, over and beyond its pedagogical and speculative concern for such resources, the means of sustaining vitality of the sacred texts and the freshness of its own faith, with no detriment to understanding. Both spontaneous and traditional, the use of the metaphoric names would become critically self-conscious; and the entry of pseudo-Dionysian metaphysics would impel that critical self-consciousness to become suddenly analytical in the highest degree", Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 114.
[78] Herbert Kessler, *Neither God Nor Man: Words, Images, and the Medieval Anxiety about Art* (Freiburg: Rombach, 2007). Ittai Weinryb similarly argues that inscriptions on Italian reliefs could draw attention to the fact that they were manmade objects; "The Inscribed Image: Negotiating Sculpture on the Coast of the Adriatic Sea", *Word and Image* 27 (2011): 322–33.

but the dissimulation of the distich encourages a kinetic response in the reader, which oscillates between the dual poles of Christ's nature.

What I suggest is that the interpolation of imaginary creatures into Romanesque carved narratives can be understood in terms of a similar dynamic. For example, the griffins that occupy either side of a nave capital from St-Marcellin, Chanteuges (fig. 24), have never been satisfactorily explained in relationship to the central scene of men in a boat.[79] This central scene has resisted definitive identification, with interpretations ranging from an unknown insular saint guarded by griffins,[80] St Julian the Hospitaler,[81] and the patron saint of the priory accompanied by griffins.[82] Yet, none of these suggestions has any solid foundation, especially with respect to the presence of griffins. According to Marcellinus's *vita*, for example, the saint sailed with two companions from North Africa to France in order to proselytize. Griffins appear in no version of the saint's *vita*, but Melzak argues that in keeping with age-old associations of these creatures, we should understand them as protectors of this journey. Melzak points out that trade along the nearby Allier River was subject to piracy during the Middle Ages, and the capital signals the church's efficacy as a source of protection.

There is a possibility that the griffins were understood as having a symbolic function within the adjacent narrative, but we might likewise consider the artifice signaled by these creatures, which had a long history within the decorative arts, from the margins of manuscripts to Byzantine silks. These associations could serve to connote a sumptuousness that would be appropriate for adorning the sacred space of church, but additionally draw attention to a notion of artifice.

Peircean semiotics, with its triad of index, symbol, and icon to categorize the ways in which meaning is communicated, has exerted a heavy influence on the discipline of art history.[83] In a little-cited series of studies, Roman Jakobson pointed out a logical exclusion of this triad that has implications for our understanding of the visual arts. For Jakobson, index and symbol can be conceived on a continuum, respectively referring to factual relations between sign and referent on the one hand and imputed or conventional relations between sign and referent on

79 See also the discussion of a harpie adjacent to a lion fighter on a narthex capital at Vézelay in Ambrose, "Samson, David, or Hercules?".
80 Zygmunt Świewchoski, *Sculpture romane d'Auvergne* (Clermont-Ferrand: G. de Bussac, 1973), 227.
81 M.-M. Macary, "Saint Julien l'Hospitalier à Chanteuges", *Centre international d'études romanes, bulletin trimestriel* (1972): 27–35. Accepted by Craplet.
82 Robert Melzak, "Saint Marcellinus between Griffins on a Romanesque Capital at Chanteuges", *Source* 9 (1990): 6–10. Subsequent authors have accepted this identification, including Heyman, '*That Old Pride of the Men of the Auvergne*', 45.
83 See, for example, the important overview of Mikah Bal and Norman Bryson, "Semiotics and Art History", *Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 174–208.

the other.[84] There is, however, no logical complement to the icon, which is more or less cast as a naturalistic pictorial representation within the Peircean triad. Symptomatic of this absence, perhaps, is the difficulty with which to apply these terms to the study of art. Does a Byzantine icon, for example, stand in indexical, symbolic, or iconic relationship to its divine referent? Jakobson suggested introducing the category of an imputed similarity in the visual arts through the term artifice. Analogues for this conceptual category of artifice have been identified in numerous pre-modern thinkers, from Aristotle to Aquinas.[85] The advantage of this term is that it moves from an essentialist notion of the image, implicit in how iconicity is conceived, to allow for more nuanced understandings of how images communicate. This notion of artifice was not necessarily yoked to illusionism as it would become in some early modern discussions of art.[86]

In stressing the artifice of the Moutiers capital, I wish to consider the possibility that Romanesque sculptors occasionally exploited the formal possibilities of their medium to specifically draw attention to the constructed nature of their representations. What might it mean to regard some Romanesque sculptures as "ringing with vibrant falsehood", to borrow Alan of Lille's paradoxical defense of the art of poetry as an appropriate and adequate vehicle for theological speculation?[87] For Alan, knowledge of the divine is never fully apprehended by human reason, but is best approximated by a series of enigmas and paradoxes.[88] Might the falsehoods and artifices highlighted by the Moutiers sculptor signal his effort to grapple with and, perhaps, transcend the communicative limitations of the sculptural medium? The scales on the lion, at odds with pictorial and textual conventions, including bestiaries, call attention to the fantastic artifice of the scene. The replacement of an altar by a multi-headed eagle, a staple of the Mediterranean silks that were prized possessions of church treasuries, blurs the distinction between ornament

---

[84]   Roman Jakobson, *Coup d'Oeil sur le développement de la sémiotique* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), 15–19.
[85]   Donald Preziosi, *Brain of the Earth's Body: Art, Museums, and the Phantasms of Modernity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 143–45.
[86]   Stephen Perkinson, "*Engin* and *Artifice*: Describing Creative Agency at the Court of France, ca. 1400", *Gesta* 41 (2002): 60–62. For early modern views, see, for example, Celeste Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 9–15, Walter S. Mellion, "Artifice, Memory, and *Reformatio* in Hieronymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditations in Evagelia*", *Renaissance and Reformation* 34 (1998): 5–34.
[87]   Alan of Lille, *De planctu naturae*, PL 190, 451.
[88]   "Unde propter sui immutabilem necessitatem, et gloriosam sui subtilitatem a philosophis paradoxae dicutur, quasi gloriosae rectae; propter sui obscuritatem aenigmata; propter internum intelligentiae splendorem dicuntur emblemata, quia puriore mentis acumine comprehenduntur; enthymemata quasi intus in mente latentia", PL 210, col. 622. Cited by Kessler, *Neither God Nor Man*, 142–43, n. 309.

and historiation to produce a patently artificial narrative.[89] The sculpture simultaneously gestures toward the well-known narratives of Cain and Abel and "Samson", but then conspicuously calls attention to the artifice of that gesture. In the end, with all the disruptions or distortions of pictorial traditions, it is the presentation of the image, rather than its representation of a singular idea, that comes to the fore.

COHERENCE

Keith Moxey identified a widespread "Hegelian Unconscious" in art historical studies, many of which take for granted that the Spirit of a period indelibly marks the work of art.[90] One tenet of this interpretive model is that artistic monuments present a unified and coherent meaning. With respect to Romanesque sculpture, this operative assumption can be identified in the desire to identify "programs" among ensembles of works, such as cloisters or nave capitals. Mary Carruthers persuasively argues that carvings facilitated active meditation toward spiritual ends, and likened the gears of the famed "Mystic Mill" capital at Vézelay (fig. 25) to medieval metaphors of cognition: the carving encourages viewers to grind away the husks of visual material in order to work toward spiritual insights.[91] This interpretation finds support in inscriptions accompanying images of Paul at St-Denis and at St-Trophîme, Arles, which laud the apostle's ability to see through the letter of the Old Order to receive the spiritual insights of the New.[92] The foregrounding of problems of interpretation in these examples suggests that medieval viewers looked to works of art for religious truths.

It remains to be explained why the presence of a metaphor of active meditation on a single capital at Vézelay implies that medieval designers and artists envisioned a unified 'program' among all their works. Carruthers argues that the capitals adjacent the Mystic Mill in the church's south aisle represent a journey from fear to conversion.[93] This attempt to locate a unified moral message among these works relies on a selective

---

[89] On artifice in an eleventh-century description of treasure, see Elizabeth M. Tyler, "'The Eyes of the Beholders were Dazzled': Treasure and Artifice in *Encomium Emmae Reginae*", *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999): 247–70, esp. 257–65.
[90] Keith Moxey, "Art History's Hegelian Unconscious: Naturalism as Nationalism in the Study of Early Netherlandish Painting", in *The Subject of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 25–51.
[91] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 92–94. See also Mary Carruthers and Jan Ziolkowski, eds, *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).
[92] Kirk Ambrose, "The 'Mystic Mill' Capital at Vézelay", in *Wind and Water: Medieval Fluid Technologies*, ed. Steven A. Walton (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 235–58.
[93] For a similar approach to the nave sculpture, see Viviane Huys-Clavel, *La Madeleine de Vézelay: Cohérence du décor sculpté de la nef* (Chambéry: Editions Comp'act, 1996).
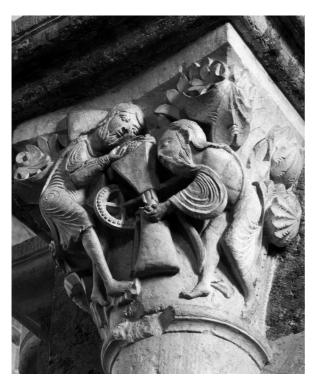
FIG. 25. "MYSTIC
MILL", NAVE
CAPITAL FROM
VÉZELAY

choice of themes that does not include many capitals along the south aisle. Moreover, the *ductus*, or rhetorical flow, that Carruthers imagines among the selected capitals along the south aisle of the church does not necessarily correspond to the ways in which viewers moved through the space, either independently or within liturgical processions. The evidence, both textual and archaeological, is too scant to determine this.

The intricate diagrams found in twelfth-century manuscripts, such as the *Liber Floridus*, can be seen to manifest something akin to a programmatic unity.[94] But the fabrication of such diagrams, typically by a single monastic scribe, represents a completely different order of complexity, or arrangement, than the decoration of a church, which requires the coordination of a large group of masons and sculptors. Moreover, the rather uniform size of the capitals of Vézelay that were caved *avant la pose* means that they could be placed atop any engaged column within the church. Within such a building schema, it is difficult to assert that any individual carving was intended for a specific location within the church. Rather, works could have been put into position as they were completed or for any number of expedient reasons. Precious little is known of the working methods of Romanesque sculptors, but it is clear that they typically worked in an ad hoc manner, often with numerous interruptions and changes in carvers within even buildings of modest scale. In recent years, the term *chantier*, or "worksite", to which workers could come and go, has gained in favor over "workshop", which implies a centrally organized and rather consistent group of workers over the life of a construction project.[95] Such inchoate building practices do not

---

[94]   Ghent, Bibliothèque de l'Université et de la Ville, MS. 16. See, for example, the classic discussion of the diagrams of this manuscript in Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art* (London: Warburg Institute, 1939), 65–67.

[95]   See, for example, the important analysis of Robert Maxwell, "Romanesque Construction and the Urban Context: Parthenay-le-Vieux in Aquitaine", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 65 (2007): 24–59. Maxwell argues that medieval builders and sculptors often worked independently, moving from site to site, rather than working in organized workshops.

readily complement the goal of advancing a tightly conceived decorative ensemble.

The very notion of an artistic program, understood as the systematic development of an underlying theme, has its origins at a later date.[96] "Program" and its cognates are absent from the terminology of eleventh- and twelfth-century descriptions of sculpture ensembles. Indeed, the notion was first applied to Romanesque sculpture by nineteenth-century scholars. In his 1847 presentation of the tympana at Vézelay, Abbé Crosnier, for one, sought to find their "arrière-plan".[97] This agenda is perhaps more a projection of the modern historian.

One might reasonably ask, by extension, whether individual Romanesque carvings were guided by a notion of program or coherence. Indeed, the absence of such a desire might help to explain the interpretive impasses in previous scholarship on individual capitals from Moutiers. A study by Deborah Kahn exemplifies the ingenious lengths that scholars have taken to make sense of these enigmatic sculptures. She identifies on another work in the Fogg Museum what she believes to be a unique reference to book 20 of Augustine's *City of God* (fig. 26).[98] Accordingly, the demon on the right side of this capital is the devil, released from bondage and a signal that the Last Judgment is imminent. Kahn frankly admits that this episode is difficult to relate to the capital's central scene of Zachariah censing an altar, but she stresses the importance of textual references for understanding Romanesque sculpture. Indeed, she suggests that an Augustinian imprint might be identified among other figures on the capital – including the woman to the right of the devil, whom Kahn tentatively identifies as a personification of the roof as Augustine puns the names of the devil and the roof that imprisoned him.

Ancient Romans associated virtually every part of a house with a god, but I am unaware of any other personifications of roofs in ancient or medieval art, much less one that wields a hammer. It, like the reference to book 20 of Augustine's *City of God*, would be unique in Western art. In view of the inventiveness of Romanesque sculptors, uniqueness does not offer sufficient grounds to dismiss this identification, nor do

---

[96] For the lack of programs in Romanesque sculpture ensembles, see Ilene Forsyth, "The Monumental Arts of the Romanesque Period: Recent Research", in *The Cloisters: Studies in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary*, ed. Elizabeth C. Parker and Mary B. Shepard (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 3–25; Robert Maxwell, "La sculpture romane et ses programmes: questions de méthode", in *Le programme: une notion pertinente en histoire de l'art médiévale*, ed. Claudia Rabel and Jean-Marie Guillouët (Paris: Le Léopard D'or, 2011), 146–47. See also Ambrose, *The Nave Sculpture of Vézelay*, xi–xiii.

[97] A.-J. Crosnier, "Iconographie de l'église de Vézelay", *Congrès archéologique de France* (Sens, 1847) 14 (1848): 225–36. See the comments of Maxwell, "Sculpture romane et ses programmes", 143.

[98] Deborah Kahn, "Saint Augustin et le diable, à props d'un chapiteau de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", *Bulletin monumental* 162 (2004): 189–192.

the seemingly obscure relations among the various figures on the capital negate Kahn's schema. Yet, it is unclear in Kahn's reading why the apocryphal story of the Annunciation to Zacharias, not related anywhere in Augustine's text, relates to soteriology, particularly the notion of imminent judgment. In other words, why must we make the assumption that all the imagery of this capital must cohere in a unified message?

Sparked by widespread interest in narratology in the 1980s and 1990s, parataxis has increasingly come to be construed by scholars as a hallmark of narrative ordering in Romanesque sculpture, whether individual works or ensembles.[99] Gaps and sudden shifts within carved stories are often interpreted as attempts to actively engage the viewer, whether physically or mentally. This narrative strategy has been linked to any number of trends in twelfth-century culture, from the energetic reading practices associated with the monastic *lectio divina* to the structures identifiable in contemporary secular literature. A widespread operative assumption has been that artists anticipated that viewers would actively look through the seemingly random choice of subject matter in sculptural ensembles to discern a coherent spiritual meaning. The non-linear character of story-telling that Walter Ong identified as characteristic of pre-literate and semi-literate societies has featured prominently in this approach.[100] Over the past twenty years, however, post-colonial critiques of Ong's scholarship have pointed out that his approach tacitly presumes the existence of a cohesive underlying symbolizing framework.[101] This presumption may be more the product of modern art history than of the medieval designers.

---

99   The most extensive application of reading practices is Leah Rutchick, "Sculpture Programs in the Moissac Cloister: Benedictine Culture, Memory Systems and Liturgical Performance" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1991). Recent art-historical adaptations of this method include Mickey Abel, "Recontextualizing the Context: The Dispute Capital from Saint-Hilaire of Poitiers and Storytelling in the Poitou around the Time of the Peace of God Movement", *Gesta* 47 (2008): 51–66.
100   See Walter Ong, *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967); idem, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Methuen, 1982).
101   Emevwo Biakolo, "On the Theoretical Foundations of Orality and Literacy", *Research*

In suggesting that all of the imagery of the Cain and Abel capital from Moutier does perhaps not cohere, I am fully aware that "incoherence" might simply be regarded as an unwitting substitution for "coherence" within an otherwise largely Hegelian interpretation. Yet, I would suggest that my reading is more than a modernist projection and that the mechanics of presentation on the carving point to a similar conclusion. The carving cobbles together seemingly unrelated imagery, whether in the fragments comprising the monstrous bodies or the seemingly unrelated scenes on two of its sides, to visually manifest a "bringing together" that lies at the core of the ancient Greek notion of "symbol". This understanding had echoes in the medieval period, as in Hugh of St Victor's definition of the symbol as: "a juxtaposition [or] a coaptation of visible forms brought forth to demonstrate some invisible matter".[102] Accordingly, the jarring juxtapositions of the carving perhaps mark an effort to visually lay bare the mechanisms of the symbol, or at the very least resist a reading.

Rather than attempt to identify a thematic unity underlying the two figural scenes of the Moutiers capital, I am interested in taking the pronounced disjunctions at face value, considering that these may have been too great for even a learned viewer, equipped with a subtle and associative mind, to bridge. Non-linearity has been seen as a widespread strategy in Romanesque art. Recent scholarship on inscriptions, for example, has demonstrated that words often stand in a complementary, rather than ostensive, relationship to adjacent sculptures. Anne-Marie Bouché argues, for example, that discoordinations between the inscriptions and images of the Conques tympanum were intended to frustrate, to spark an emotional and intellectual response that would make the imagery all the more resonant for the viewer.[103] Although many of these inscriptions adopt phraseology that echo the liturgy of the monastery, they do not ultimately offer an authoritative interpretation of the tympanum. Rather, the viewer must assemble the piecemeal texts and images to construct her own imagery.

The inscrutable presence of the monster on the Moutiers capital perhaps suggests that we might question the notion that sculptures were consistently intended to advance an exegetical or theological message. Doubtless there were textual bases for aspects of the Moutiers capital, but

---

in *African Literatures* 30, no. 2 (1999): 42–65; Nicholas Hudson, *Writing and European Thought, 1600–1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[102] "symbolum, collatio videlicet, id est coaptatio visibilium formarum ad demonstrationem rei invisibilis propositarum", PL 175, 960.

[103] Anne-Marie Bouché, "*Vox Imaginis*: Anomaly and Enigma in Romanesque Art", in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 317–30. See also Kirk Ambrose, ''Visual Poetics of the Cluny Hemicycle Capital Inscriptions'', *Word & Image* 20 (2004): 155–64; M.T. Clanchy, ''Reading the Signs at Durham Cathedral'', in *Literacy and Society*, ed. Karen Schousboe and Mogens Trolle Larsen (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1989), 171–82; Weinryb, "Inscribed Image".

its monsters largely stand as singular examples when viewed against the horizon of iconographic traditions. For this reason, our understanding of these creatures need not readily conform to textual metaphors, such as glossing and exegesis, for understanding the significance of these carved beasts. Indeed, the force of this imagery largely stems from its resistance to meaning, to its overturning of our expectations. Under such circumstances, it appears misguided to "read" these monsters in a lexicographic sense. Rather, as the next chapter argues, a poetics of Romanesque monsters that is largely independent of a semantic imprint offers a potentially profitable approach to these creatures of the imagination.

CREATING MONSTERS 4

¡Oh monstruos, razón de la pintura,
sueño de la poesía!   Rafael Alberti, *Picasso*

MIXTURES

The first three chapters of this volume focused largely on examples of atavism in Romanesque sculpture, considering why artists embraced monstrous types that had long histories. I turn here to examine an alternative mode of artistic production, one in which sculptors departed from established pictorial types to create new forms of monsters. An unpublished twelfth-century capital in the University of Colorado Art Museum (fig. 27) is representative of this practice.[1] On two of its corners the carving features beastly maws that spew tendrils of vegetation, which, in turn, entwine two monstrous mixtures of feathered wings, avian feet, hair, serpentine tails, and dragon-like heads that crane their necks as they bite into bunches of grapes. To label these latter creatures "dragons" seems somewhat reductive, for this nomenclature does not fully account for the morphology of these creatures, which varied widely in medieval art.[2] Some examples have bird wings, while others are wingless; some have avian talons, others reptilian claws, and still others have no feet at all. Aside from the serpentine body, there are no universal features in medieval pictorial traditions that are consistently associated with "dragons".

Several of the elements that comprise the Colorado monsters, such as the flame-like tufts of hair, have roots in the early decades of the twelfth century, when Burgundian artists developed a sculptural vocabulary of

[1]   CU Art Museum 2010.1.P. The museum dossier contains a number of unpublished scholarly assessments provided at the time of purchase by the Sam Fogg gallery.
[2]   See, for example, Jurgis Baltrusaitis, *Le Moyen Age fantastique: antiquités et exotismes dans l'art gothique* (Paris: A. Colin, 1955), 155–61; V.-H. Debidor, *Le bestiaire sculpté du moyen âge en France* (Paris: Arthaud, 1961), 220–21; Sara Kuehn, *The Dragon in Medieval East Christian and Islamic Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 4.

FIG. 27. CAPITAL
WITH DRAGON-
LIKE BIRDS
AND VEGETAL
DECORATION,
EASTERN FRANCE
(?), CA. 1150

the monstrous at Cluny, Moutier-St-Jean, and Vézelay, among other sties.[3] These motifs were soon adopted as part of the visual vocabulary of sculptors practicing in regions to the east, including at the cloister of Notre-Dame-en-Vaux, Châlons-sur-Saone, and to the south, as at St-Trophîme, Arles. The ubiquity of similarly imaginative creatures by 1150 makes it difficult to locate the origins of the Colorado capital with precision, for rather than invent monsters *de novo*, sculptors creatively admixed stock elements in myriad ways. Such paratactic modes of representation have been identified as characteristic of twelfth-century monsters in art and literature, a contrast to the more synthetic modes of representation that emerged in the thirteenth century.[4] Indeed, a wide range of morphologies characterize the "dragons" within the initials and margins of contemporary manuscripts, often the products of monastic scriptoria. In biological terms, these creatures might be classified into species and subspecies.[5]

One might attempt to locate significance in these various formal iterations,[6] but it bears noting that the symbolism of these creatures has vexed generations of scholars, who have concluded that there was a polysemous or ambiguous aspect to dragons in medieval culture.[7] For example, dragons combated saints in numerous *vitae*, appeared on nobles' banners, and were reproduced in effigy for Rogation processions. While these creatures often symbolized evil, this was not always the case. Jacques Le Goff, for example, argues that Isidore of Seville's *Sententiae* largely treat dragons in a "scientific" rather than symbolic manner.[8] Habitat,

[3]   Capitals in the nave of Vézelay, for example, feature the tufts of hair and contorted, bivalently disposed figures that eat grapes; see the discussion of examples in Ambrose, *The Nave Sculpture at Vézelay*, 87–88 (nave capital 3), 105 (nave capital 61).
[4]   Sébastien Douchet, "La peau de centaure à la frontière de l'humanité et de l'animalité", *Micrologus* 13 (2005): 310–12. See also Hervé Martin, *Mentalités médiévales, XIe–XVe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998); Paul Zumthor, *La mesure du monde: Representation de l'espace au Moyen Age* (Paris: Seuil, 1993), 51.
[5]   See, for example, Friedman, *Monstrous Race*s; Kappler, *Monstres, demons, et merveilles*, 115–83; Williams, *Deformed Discourse*, 107–227.
[6]   See, for example, Marc Thibout, "L'evolution de la faunde dans la sculpture française du moyen âge", *Bulletin de la Société nationale de l'acclimation de France* (1943): 125–41.
[7]   Kuehn, *Dragon*, 10–13; Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 175–77.
[8]   Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 166–67. The passage that Le Goff analyzes is Isidore of Seville, *Sententia*e 3.5.28 (PL 83, col. 665).

morphology, and other descriptive concerns predominate in the Spaniard's treatment of dragons.

Rather than attempt to locate a meaning in the kaleidoscopic forms that monsters could take, the following pages consider a different question, namely why such remarkable artistic invention was tolerated in representations of monsters, what needs it addressed. Historians of Romanesque art have tended to consider the question of creativity from the perspective of the artist. Jurgis Baltrušaitis devoted much attention to the artistic processes underlying the protean appearance of Romanesque monsters, adapting Henri Focillon's notion of the *vie des forms*.[9] Both Baltrušaitis and Focillon posited – without demonstrating – a framing structure that limited and shaped the appearance of sculptural forms. In a biting critique of this approach, Meyer Schapiro argued that Romanesque sculptors appear to have been unbound by *a priori* formal laws. Rather, he argued that examples of artists' freedom signaled an increasing awareness of their own originality and self-worth.[10] Rudolf Berliner likewise noted the "freedom" of medieval artists to invent.[11] Among the Romanesque examples he cited is the Crucifixion scene on the bronze doors of Novgorod, where Christ extends his hand toward his mother, a gesture without textual or pictorial precedent. Berliner argued that this innovation serves to enhance the emotional connection between mother and son,[12] corresponding broadly to his interpretation of medieval creativity as a vehicle to intensify the affective power of religious scenes. This interpretive model, which envisions artists transforming iconographic traditions, does not obviously apply to inventive carvings of monsters, which do not have an obvious meaning. Moreover, the rather Romantic model of the medieval artist advanced by Berliner and Schapiro potentially shortchanges the role of the patron and of audiences, who may have been interested in more than simply providing an arena for emotional expression of artists. Why would patrons allow so much creative and economic energy to be devoted to carvings of monsters? What needs did this activity serve?

To pursue these questions, the present chapter focuses on a creature carved on a nave capital of La Madeleine, Vézelay (figs 28 and 29), that

---

[9]   Jurgis Baltrusaitis, *Moyen Age fantastique*; idem, *Reveils et prodiges: le gothique fantastiques* (Paris: A. Colin, 1960).
[10]   Schapiro, *Romanesque Art*, 20, 33.
[11]   Rudolf Berliner, "The Freedom of Medieval Art," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* ser. 6, 28 (1945): 263–88. See also R.W. Hanning and Clifford Davidson, "Ut Enim faber – sic creator: Divine Creation as Context for Human Creativity in the Twelfth Century", in *Word, Picture, Spectacle: Papers by Karl P. Wentersdorf,* ed. Cifford Davidson (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1984), 95–149.
[12]   Adolph Goldschmidt believed that this gesture was appropriated from Deposition scenes; *Die Bronzetüren* von Nowgorod und Gnesen (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen seminars der Universität Marburg, 1932), 16. See also Hans-Joachim Krause and Ernst Schubert, *Die Bronzetür der Sophienkathedrale in Nowgorod* (Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1968), 55.

FIG. 28.
MONSTROUS
BATTLE, LEFT
VIEW OF NAVE
CAPITAL,
VÉZELAY

incorporates a lion's body covered with thick locks of hair, clawed forepaws, wings, serpentine tail, and a demon-like face. Atop this monster sits a man with a rod, which likely terminated in a point near the wide-mouthed demonic figure at left, who hunches over a form that some scholars have identified as a purse, though the many abrasions to this portion of the capital make such a reading necessarily speculative.[13] It is further unclear whether the designer of this capital intended to represent a specific narrative or a generalized image of monstrous combat.

In confronting this enigmatic scene, historians have tended to concentrate on the monster, typically identifying it as a griffin.[14] This nomenclature tends to obscure the creature's morphological singularity, for although there was some variety in the forms of ancient representations of griffins, such as the occasional inclusion of feathers or scales around the neck, the body of a leonine quadruped and an aquiline beak are *sine qua nons* absent at Vézelay.[15] Faithfully executed griffins were a staple of Romanesque sculptors, including Burgundian examples at La-Charité-sur-Loire and Cluny. That treasuries, such as that of the Royal Abbey of St-Denis, included griffin claws and eggs mounted in elaborate metalwork, further suggest widespread familiarity with this ancient mythological creature.[16]

The Vézelay monster has loose parallels elsewhere in European Romanesque sculpture. Examples include two capitals at Piacenza cathedral that feature men's heads atop winged creatures with snake tails and a figure on a jamb relief at Charlieu with a bearded head, winged equine hindquarters, and a snake's tail.[17] Even so, there are significant

---

[13] It is interesting to note that Pliny was but one of many Greek and Roman authors that described griffins as guardians of gold mines in Scythia in central Asia (*Natural History*, 7.10, 10. 136). For this textual tradition, see Mayor, *The First Fossil Hunters*, 29–33. My research has not revealed a pictorial representation relating to this belief.

[14] For bibliography on this capital, see Ambrose, *Nave Sculpture at Vézelay*, 102–03.

[15] Mayor, *First Fossil Hunters*, 16–17. Mayor argues that this mythological creature is based on observations of exposed skeletons of the protoceratops in central Asia.

[16] *Le Trésor de Saint-Denis: Musée du Louvre, Paris, 12 mars–17 juin 1991* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1991), 223–25; Joseph Braun, *Die Reliquare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1940), pp. 129–31 and nos 184–87.

[17] Julianna Lees suggests that these snake-tailed figures derive from Islamic art via

differences among these and other
roughly contemporary examples, which
present various combinations of similar
motifs more than articulations of a
standard type.[18] Monsters created outside
Europe likewise share many features
with the Vézelay example, such as
dog-headed birds, sometimes identified
as semurws or simurghs, that feature on
early medieval silks and other portable
works from the eastern Mediterranean.[19]
A seventh-century Sassanian silver
plate in the British Museum features
a creature with wagging tongue and
clawed feet, though its tail is feathered,
not serpentine, and it lacks locks of
hair on its body.[20] Such luxury goods
might have served as inspiration for the
Vézelay sculptor, but it does not fully
explain his innovative combinations.

FIG. 29.
MONSTROUS
BATTLE, RIGHT
VIEW OF NAVE
CAPITAL,
VÉZELAY

Given the uncertainties of identity of the Vézelay monster, maybe
intentional, it is perhaps constructive to refer to its protean appearance
as a "mixture", a term which, along with its cognates, had currency in
the Middle Ages (e.g. *mixtura*). The term typically did not imply the
combination of only two elements, as is the case for "hybrid", which has
gained currency in recent decades with the rise of post-colonial studies
in the academy. I am interested in this notion of mixing primarily from
a morphological standpoint, though some have posited broader cultural
significance in this term. Bynum, for one, has argued that cognates of
"mixture" (e.g. *mixtura*, *miscere*, *admiscere*) feature prominently in Bernard

Beatus manuscripts: "Monsters with Snake Tails in Romanesque and Pre-Romanesque
Art with Special Reference to Islamic Influence and Influence on Islamic Art", http://
www.green-man-of-cercles.org/articles/snake_tails.pdf (consulted 7 February 2012). Lees
provides a wealth of examples, but fails to demonstrate a common morphology linking
these types, save for the snake tail.

[18] Other variations of this type may be found at Ste-Marie du Mont, Saint-Étienne, and
Villandry.

[19] For the many forms of this monster, see Hans-Peter Schmidt, "The Semurw. Of
Birds and Dogs and Bats," *Persica* 9 (1980): 1–85. A semurw plays an important role in
Ferdowsi's epic *Shah-nameh*, composed circa 1010, but the poem does not offer a detailed
description of the creature. Later illustrated versions of this poem represent the semurw
as a fantastic bird, without a dog's head.

[20] A similar semurw is found on an Iranian stucco relief from the seventh or eighth
century in the British Museum (Registration number 1973,0725,1). An additional example
apparently made from the same mould was offered for auction through Sotheby's London,
8 October 2008, "Arts of the Islamic World, including Fine Carpets and Textiles", 99, lot
63.

of Clairvaux's understanding of ontology, psychology, and spirituality.[21] Generally, Bernard uses the term pejoratively, in the sense of impurity. By the same token he does refer to Christ as a divine and earthly mixture. It is this positive sense, Bynum argues, that offers the hope of spiritual ascendancy for the monk, the possibility of arising out of the material existence toward spiritual union (*unitas*) with God.

"Hybrid", by contrast, had little or no purchase in twelfth-century thought. Indeed, medieval Latin dictionaries, including Charles du Fresne Du Cange's and Jan Frederik Niermeyer's, lack entries for *hybrida* or *hibrida*. This might help to explain why hybrids were not a discrete taxonomic category in medieval bestiaries: griffins, combinations of eagles and lions, feature with other winged animals; even semi-hominoids were not grouped together.[22] Depending on how they were represented, with wings or with fish tails, sirens featured next to other fish or birds, but never with satyrs and centaurs.[23] Sometimes having the sense of unlawful, "hybrid" was used by classical authors, such as Martial and Pliny, to refer to an individual of dual parentage, typically Roman and barbarian.[24] Early-modern humanists referred to neologisms that incorporate roots from two languages as *vox hybrida*; "television", which springs from Greek (*telos*) and Latin (*visio*), is a familiar example coined in the twentieth century. Today linguists continue this usage and paleographers refer to scripts such as "hybrid Gothic". The heterogeneity implicit in hybridity doubtless has an appeal that helps to explain its application to other fields, from the designation of literary genres, such as the coupling of romance and history, to the characterization of entire cultures.[25] For example, many scholars have described medieval Spain, inhabited by peoples of different religions and ethnicities, as a hybrid culture.[26] Recent critiques of this historical narrative have pointed out, however, that transplanting a genealogical term to the realm of cultural production can be problematic, for diverse populations do not necessarily foster cross-cultural exchanges.[27] In cases of demonstrable exchange, motivations underlying the adoption of a style or

---

[21] Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity*, 113–62. It is worth noting that Bynum several times uses the word "hybrid" interchangeably with "mixture", though this is not in conformity with Bernard's language.

[22] Gravestock, "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?", 124.

[23] Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries*, 108.

[24] See, for example, Martial, *Epigrams*, 8.22; Pliny, *Natural History*, 8.17.

[25] A. Leupin, *Barbarolexis: Medieval Writing and Sexuality*, trans. K.M. Cooper (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

[26] For probing critiques of this term, see J. Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 1–5 and passim; D. Fairchild Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Geneaology, and Acculturation in al-Andulus", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34, no. 1 (2004): 65.

[27] See, for example, A. Brah and A.E. Coombes, eds, *Hybridity and Its Discontents* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Claire Farago, ed., *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450–1650* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 1–20.

motif are complex, a reality that the implicit passivity of a miscegenation metaphor fails to capture. Viewed from this perspective, the more active connotations of "mixture" can avoid such potential shortcomings.

In addition to morphology, mixing can likewise be observed in the carving techniques of the Vézelay monster. The sculptor used numerous tools, including a toothed chisel for the grooves on the locks of hair; a drill for the holes on the neck, belly, and tail; a bull point chisel for the wings; a spoon chisel for the area around the eyes; and a pointed chisel for the base of the claws and at the edges of the eyelids. The desire among Romanesque sculptors for increasingly refined modes of description or mimesis might be identified as one entelechy underlying this acute sensitivity to the articulation of forms, but the creature's body simultaneously indexes the carving techniques of its own fabrication.

The following pages consider how morphological and technical mixing related to the ritual functions of the surrounding architectural space, which serviced both monks and the laity. First, I suggest that monstrous mixtures offered one vehicle to negotiate the relationships between these two distinct social groups, each with different sets of interests. Indeed, the numerous tensions between the monastic community and the townspeople perhaps invested this project with particular urgency. Second, I consider the presentational strategy of the capital, suggesting that rather than regard this work from the perspective of the form/content dichotomy that underlies many art-historical inquiries, many aspects of the work foster a participatory relationship with the viewer. I suggest that we might profitably consider monsters in Romanesque art from the perspective of poetics, distinct, say, from an iconography of these creatures. This approach finds justification in the fact that monks were avid readers and writers of verse. To be sure, other possible interpretations for the Vézelay mixture might be offered.[28] For example, this creature could emblematize evil or as serve an apotropaic function that would be appropriate within the House of God. The open mouths, wagging tongues, and contorted postures of the figures on this capital likewise conflict with contemporary modes of bodily decorum. By the second decade of the twelfth century, when this work was carved, bodily comportment was increasingly viewed as offering insight into an individual's moral character, as Hugh of St Victor's twelfth-century guidebook for novices suggests.[29] In view of such

---

[28]   Unlike the tympanum that leads into Vézelay's nave, nothing on the monster capital clearly relates to the geographies of Pliny and Herodotus, which served as the basis of medieval *Mappae Mundi*, inhabited by bizarre creatures at their edges. These creatures prompted endless commentary. In his *City of God*, for example, Augustine influentially argued that these wonders of the East should prompt admiration for all of God's creation. See the helpful overview of scholarship on the geography of the monstrous in Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 21–66.

[29]   Hugh of St Victor, *De institutione novitiorum* (PL 176, 925–52). See the helpful commentary of Jean-Claude Schmitt, *La Raison des Gestes dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 174–93.

attitudes, these figures can serve as antitypes to approved behavior. The fallen aspect of these figures is signaled by the rendering of the body of the man astride the monster (fig. 29), whose flesh appears to peel away as if rotting. Moralized and apotropaic readings can offer some insight, but they could apply to virtually any monster, for they ultimately fail to explain the inventive morphology that occupies such a prominent position on the Vézelay capital. The notion of mixing, I suggest, offers one way for us to consider in concrete terms the ways in which this monster addressed the specific cultural and social concerns of its patrons.

RITUAL AND SOCIAL ORDERING

Located approximately three meters up the fifth pier to the west of the entrance to Vézelay's nave, the monster capital is highly legible. Indeed, capitals on the freestanding piers throughout the nave can be readily viewed from a number of vantage points, including from the central vessel of the nave and even from the opposite aisle. This high visibility does not characterize the two other positions that capitals occupy within the nave. Capitals atop the engaged columns located along either exterior wall of the aisles are best viewed while standing in close proximity, and the capitals of the clerestory of the central vessel can be extremely difficult to read because of their rather substantial distance from the paving. Occupying a prominent place within the sculptural ensemble of the nave, the monster capital stands on equal footing with similarly positioned capitals featuring scenes from the Old Testament and from saints' lives. To describe it as marginal seems unsatisfactory, for there is no obvious distinction made in the disposition of the capitals between center and periphery.[30]

During the Middle Ages, the nave functioned as a relatively public space, accessible to both laypeople and clerics. The nave witnessed processions, the Mass, and the cants of the *opus dei*. A breviary compiled circa 1300 is the single liturgical manuscript to survive from the monastery, and though it mentions altars throughout the nave, it does not specify their precise locations.[31] For this reason, the precise ritual associations and uses of the space surrounding specific carvings remain unknowable. Archeological evidence likewise fails to shed light on this question. Nevertheless, the

---

[30]   See, for example, Nurith Keenan-Kedar, *Marginal Sculpture in France: Towards the Deciphering of an Enigmatic Pictorial Languag*e (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1995). It bears noting that the very notion of marginality is contingent upon what is deemed to be central. Caution is, thus, warranted in applying either term, for notions of center and margin may change over time. See the comments of Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 11–55.
[31]   Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 555. See the discussion of this manuscript's date in Charles Samaran and Robert Marichal, *Catalogue des manuscites dates en écriture latine* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1968), 6: 259. See also the discussion of the liturgical uses of the nave in Ambrose, *Nave Sculpture of Vézelay*, 1–13.

public aspect to the monster capital sharply contrasts, say, cloister carvings, viewed only by monks.

In considering the social significance of this monster capital, we are fortunate that the history of Vézelay is relatively well documented in comparison to many other twelfth-century institutions. The monastery ranked among the most important in Western Europe, as attested by the activities of many prominent individuals. Bernard of Clairvuax launched the second crusade just outside the abbey church with a rousing sermon; Thomas Becket sought refuge in the cloister during his conflict with the English monarch; and Peter the Venerable served as prior here before becoming abbot of Cluny.[32]

The key document for the medieval history of Vézelay is a substantial chronicle written by Hugh of Poitiers in the 1160s.[33] In his prefatory remarks, the monk states that his primary reason for writing was to record the many efforts, especially those of Abbot Pons, in safeguarding the rights and privileges of the monastery.[34] Hugh details these efforts on two main fronts, the political and the material. With respect to the former, the monk repeatedly advocates for the juridical independence of Vézelay, which, at the time of its foundation in the ninth century, had been exempted from all ecclesiastical oversight, save that of the pope.[35] Not all church officials recognized this rather unusual legal status. Several bishops, especially those of Autun, along with the abbots of Cluny, plotted to assert their control over the monastery. For a time Cluny succeeded in this effort, claiming Vézelay as a priory from circa 1058 until Abbot Pons, with papal backing, successfully reasserted his institution's autonomy in 1162. Although Hugh of Poitiers expressed pleasure at the outcome, it bears noting that the precise history for the path to independence is spotty. Some abbots, such as Renard (1106–1124), nephew of the great Abbot Hugh of Cluny (1049–1109), appear to have been unswerving in their loyalty to Cluny. There seemed to be divided allegiances among the monastic community.

---

[32] For a highly readable overview of the monastery's history, see Bernard Pujo, *Histoire de Vézelay: Des origines à l'an 2000* (Paris: Perrin, 2000).

[33] This chronicle, along with other texts associated with the history of the monastery, is preserved in a single manuscript: Auxerre, Bibiliothèque Municipale, Ms 227. An excellent edition of this manuscript is *Monumenta Vizeliacensia: Textes relatifs à l'histoire de l'abbaye de Vézelay*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens, CCCM 42 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1972), 195–607. A partial English translation is found in John Scott and John O. Ward. *The Vézelay Chronicle* (New York: Pegasus, 1992), 87–315.

[34] For an overview of the political situation at Vézelay, see Rosalind K. Berlow, "Social and Economic Aspects of the Early History of Vézelay (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)", (PhD dissertation, City University of New York, 1971); A. Chérest, "Vézelay: Étude Historique," *Bulletin de la Société des sciences historique et naturelles de l'Yonne* 16 (1862): 209–525; 22 (1868): 5–631; Chérest is rpt in *Monumenta Vizeliacensia*, ed. Huygens, 1–194, and Scott and Ward, *Vézelay Chronicle*, 1–86.

[35] See the helpful discussion of this status in Rosalind K. Berlow, "Spiritual Immunity at Vézelay (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)", *Catholic Historical Review* 62 (1976): 573–88.

Widespread interest in Vézelay's affairs largely stemmed from its substantial material holdings. Hugh takes pains to describe the ongoing problems the monks faced in protecting their real property and praises Abbot Pons's exemplary efforts:

> For, although his predecessors have effected more in terms of the acquisition of lands and construction of buildings, he has certainly labored more than all those in the course of valiantly guarding the church, safe, whole, and unharmed, from those who sought to plunder and overturn it.[36]

The monk does not simply have claustral buildings in mind here, but the abbey's many lands, mills, ecclesiastical dependencies, and other holdings spread across France. At mid-century the number of these holdings was on the rise; from the names listed on cartularies, its holdings appear to have roughly doubled in number from 1103 to 1170. It is not always clear how large each of these parcels of land were, but these holdings constituted the economic lifeblood of this community.

Doubtless the prospect of having access to these riches acted as an irresistible incentive for abbots and bishops to attempt to exert their administrative control over Vézelay. This situation was perhaps exacerbated by the rather unusual legal status of the monastery. At the time of its foundation by Count Girard in the ninth century, Vézelay had been placed under the exclusive juridical control of the pope.[37] As the monastery grew in wealth, regional bishops, including those at Autun and Sens, attempted to assert their right to oversee and govern the monastery's affairs. These ploys all proved unsuccessful, but the records of the many legal appeals recorded in Hugh's chronicle suggest that the monks of Vézelay were continually embroiled in one dispute or another. The monks cleverly negotiated this situation by inviting bishops from different cities to perform rituals that required episcopal participation, such as the tonsure ceremony and installment of new abbots, thereby avoiding the appearance of reliance on any single see.

Members of the laity were likewise attracted to Vézelay's wealth. In particular, the counts of Nevers repeatedly attempted to profit from the monastery. Among other tactics, they levied taxes on pilgrims traveling to the monastery, disputed the monastery's ownership of real property, and incited the villagers of Vézelay to revolt against their monastic lords. At several points, the counts even resorted to violence against the monks. In 1119, for example, the count's men entered the monastery, desecrated the cloister and, in the process, hurled stones at the relics of Martha and Lazarus, as well as those of the martyrs Andeolus and

---

[36] Scott and Ward, *Vézelay Chronicle*, 131. Cf. *Monumenta Vizeliacensia*, ed. Huygens, 395.
[37] Berlow, "Spiritual Immunity".

Pontianus, and broke up a fragment of the true cross.[38] If nothing else, this act of vandalism evinces the power of relics: violence against them was tantamount to violence against the monastery. The episode further highlights the precarious position of the monks, especially against armed attacks. In large part Hugh took up the pen to stave off the sword. On another occasion, in a speech that aimed to convince the residents of Vézelay that he should exercise legal jurisdiction over the town, the count of Nevers compared the abbot to a "tyrant" and then asserted "monkish prayers, even if they don't deserve rejection, are usually of slight efficacy".[39] This claim is a clear and direct challenge to a key social function of monks as those that acted as mediators between God and the faithful.

Evidence of social strife with the laity can be found throughout Hugh's chronicle. In 1104, shortly before construction on the present nave began, Abbot Artuad was murdered. The perpetrator was never identified, though Hugh's account points to two likely candidates: henchman of the Count of Nevers or the townspeople of Vézelay. With respect to the latter, there is evidence of repeated negotiations with the abbot over their legal status, the taxes imposed by the monastery, and other issues. At one point, in 1153, the townspeople became exasperated and evicted the community of monks from the town for a period of two years. Augustin Thierry, the celebrated nineteenth-century historian, would influentially argue that this remarkable event marked the first commune in France, anticipating thirteenth-century revolts against the church in Laon and Reims.[40] Though this view today seems overstated, the expulsion of the monks was a remarkable sign of the townspeople's solidarity, if not the burdensome administrative policies of the monks.

From this brief overview it is clear that the monks of Vézelay had to navigate a rather treacherous political climate, and the need for this community to define their social role may have been particularly acute. As noted in the introduction, Mâle viewed Romanesque carvings of demons and monsters in terms of the spiritual battles of monks, who identified themselves as the soldiers of Christ (*miles Christi*).[41] The erudite priest drew the significance of these battle lines at the edges of the monastery, never fully engaging the question of how monks' role as warriors serviced

---

[38] *Monumenta Vizeliacensia*, ed. Huygens, 362–65; Scott and Ward, *Vézelay Chronicle*, 118–21.

[39] Scott and Ward, *Vézelay Chronicle*, 174. "At monachorum preces, et siquando repulsam non merentur, inefficacia sepius diminuuntur", in *Monumenta Vizeliacensia*, ed. Huygens, 428.

[40] Augustin Thierry, *Lettres sur l'histoire de France* (Paris: Garnier, 1827), nos 22 and 24. Thierry believed that the struggles at Vézelay evinced a love of liberty among the French people and marked a harbinger of the Revolution. See also the discussion of Kirk Ambrose, "Viollet-le-Duc's Judith at Vézelay: Romanesque Sculpture Restoration as (Nationalist) Art", *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 10, no. 1 (2011), http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org.

[41] Mâle, *Twelfth Century*, 364–76.

the laity. This position finds support in the fact that monastic sermons tend to be rather introspective, more concerned with the advancement of monks spiritual lives than enhancing the religious lives of laymen.

This is true of the sermons of Julian of Vézelay, written at the monastery in the 1160s, and which were clearly conceived as exhortations and encouragements to his brothers in their pursuit of the monastic vocation. This focus seems appropriate given that these sermons seem to record the traces of orations delivered in the chapter house, a space reserved for monks.[42] Yet by culling evidence from sources such as sermons and letters, as Mâle did in his analysis, one receives a narrow, albeit richly textured, impression of monastic life. There is ample evidence that monks conceived their vocation within a broad social framework. The widespread notion of the three orders in high medieval society, on which the *miles Christi* metaphor depends, is profoundly relational in its conceptualization, imagining a mutual benefit and interdependence for those that work, those that pray, and those that fight.[43] Within this imaginary, the monks served a profoundly important social function as those that prayed for the salvation of all Christian souls. This role was formalized in the liturgy, for example, in sponsored prayers of remembrance for lay donors. It is these donations that offer palpable evidence of the profound social ties between the laity and monks. Barbara Rosenwein argues that lay donations to Cluny were conceived not as one-time events, but as establishing relationships between secular families and the monastic community that lasted over many generations.[44] The many contestations of donations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, she argues, evince a dynamic relationship, whose terms were continuously negotiated.

As indicated above, monastic rituals held a significance that extended well beyond the walls of the cloister. Lay donations to the monastery were made, in part, in the hopes of being remembered within the liturgy, from benefiting from the prayers of monks. Indirect evidence for the social weight or importance of monastic ritual may be culled from its very elaborateness. In addition to the processions, chants, and other performative aspects, there was a rich material aspect to this liturgy, with incense, candles, metalwork, silks, and other luxury goods, helping to embellish the nave. The customaries of Cluny, which were likely observed at Vézelay in the twelfth century, describe a complex set of observances over the liturgical year.[45] Drawing on the work of anthropologists, Carruthers has argued that twelfth-century monastic communities tended

---

[42] See discussion of the internal evidence of Julien's sermons by Damien Vorreux, "Introduction", in Julien de Vézelay, *Sermons*, ed. Vorreux, 1: 15.

[43] See the classic study of Georges Duby, *Les trois orders: ou, L'imaginaire du féodalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

[44] Barbara Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of St. Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 201.

[45] See the edited versions of the customaries in *Consuetudines Cluniacensium antiquiores*

to value orthopraxy – the correct observance of rituals – over orthodoxy, subscription to correct beliefs.[46] Liturgy played a prominent role in how traditional Benedictines defined themselves.

Mary Douglas contends that the desire to establish purity stands as a primary motivation for religious ritual.[47] Constitutive of this purgative function is the notion of dirt, a relational category comprising things that stand outside the sacral order, including monsters. Douglas eschewed allegorical readings of dirt to consider how categorical anomalies serve to articulate boundaries, cosmic, political, and social. In her reading of the abominations listed in Leviticus, for example, she refutes arguments that these were motivated by concern for hygiene or had hidden symbolic import. Rather, these unclassifiable elements, from ibexes to menstruating women, simply fell outside accepted cosmic patterns and were therefore to be shunned by the Jewish community. By articulating what constitutes dirt, what stands outside the parameters of the acceptable, members of a given society establish order.

The Vézelay monster can be understood in terms similar to Douglas's notion of dirt. For this protean creature, which cannot even be identified in terms of established types of monsters, resists categorization. Although individual elements of this monstrous body can be linked with various animals, in toto they represent an unidentifiable mixture. Moreover, a concern for ordering through monstrous bodies might be identified in other monsters within the sculptural corpus of Vézelay, including the three celebrated portals that offer access into the nave. A three-headed bird, a basilisk, fauns, and a creature with a human head, bird's body and serpentine tail, literally occupy the threshold between the profane space outside and the sacred space within the nave.[48] The celebrated tympanum above the central portal (fig. 8) features men with the heads of dogs, the snouts of pigs, and other Marvels of the East, ultimately drawn from Pliny and other ancient sources, encompass the figures of Christ and the apostles. Differences of interpretation abound within the voluminous scholarship on this tympanum, but there exists wide agreement that the tympanum presents an oppositional relationship between the followers of Christ at center and the semi-hominoids around its perimeter.[49] In other

---

cum redactionibus derivatis, ed. Kassius Hallinger, Corpus consuetudinum monasticarum 7.2 (Siegburg: F. Schmitt, 1983).

[46] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 1–2.

[47] In addition to Douglas, see the similar thesis of Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967).

[48] Respectively, these are capitals 3, 74, IX, amd III. These numbers refer to the system established by Francis Salet, *La Madeleine de Vézelay: Étude iconographique* (Melun: Librairie d'Argences, 1948). It is important to note that the current narthex had not been envisioned as part of the original church design.

[49] See, for example, Katzenellenbogen, "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay"; Low, "You Who Were Once Far Off".

words, there is a sense of relational ordering that permeates the logic of this sculpture.

The literal demarcation of the boundary of sacred and profane spaces does not so obviously apply to the monsters on the nave capitals, which occupy the space within the church. Another anthropologist, René Girard, has argued that figures of monsters often arise in the context of sacrifices, such as the Mass, for "the transformation of the real into the unreal is part of the process by which man conceals from himself the human origin of his own violence, by attributing it to the gods".[50] Monsters are the hallucinatory complement of the transgressions of mythology and sacred violence. Drawing primarily on readings of Greek myths and of Old Testament stories, he argues that these creatures serve to mask the fact that social orders are human constructions, not manifestations of divine will. Ritual violence offers up a holocaust to appease divine wrath on behalf of a human community, but in social terms, the victim serves to coalesce the violent impulses of communities in a sanctioned form. The choice of victim is crucial, for this helps establish a social order in which clerics control access to the sacred. Girard devotes substantial attention to the Genesis story of the dying Isaac, who asks his eldest son to bring him a savory meal, after which he will receive his blessing. His wife Rebecca wishes this blessing to be conferred on her younger son, Jacob. To ensure this outcome, she takes two kids from their flock, butchers them, and cooks a meal, which Jacob, in the guise of his elder brother Esau, presents to Isaac. Jacob identifies himself as Esau, and the patriarch double checks this assertion by asking to touch him. Isaac mistakes Jacob for his elder brother because Rebecca has placed the kids' skins on his neck and hands. Jacob displaces his antagonist, Esau, as rightful heir to his father through this ruse. According to Girard, the slaughtered kids interpose themselves between father and son, literally insulating Jacob from a direct contact with his father that could only lead to violence or conflict. After Jacob receives his father's blessing, Esau begs Isaac to bless him as well.

> And he [Isaac] said: Thy brother came deceitfully and got thy blessing.
> But he said again: Rightly is his name called Jacob; for he hath supplanted me lo this second time: my first birthright he took away before, and now this second time he hath stolen away my blessing. And again he said to his father: Hast thou not reserved me also a blessing?

---

[50] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 161. See also Gilmore, *Monsters*, 21–22.

> Isaac answered: I have appointed him thy lord, and have made
> all his brethren his servants: I have established him with corn
> and wine, and after this, what shall I do more for thee, my son?
> (Genesis 27, 35–37)[51]

The second act of deception occupies the central face of capitals of the nave and the narthex of Vézelay. Both carvings feature Jacob wearing mittens, which Isaac touches as he raises his hands in blessing. In both cases, Esau is shown returning with his quarry, as if to emphasize his displacement. Yet, it is unclear whether medieval viewers would have read this scene in terms of deceit. Throughout his sermons, Julian of Vézelay repeatedly emphasizes Jacob's divinely sanctioned role as heir to Isaac. Esau, he argues, had nothing to complain about in Jacob's deception, for it was ultimately a manifestation of divine will that this second son received his father's blessing.[52] Julian's interpretation finds no support in the Bible, which does nothing to conceal Jacob's usurpation of his brother's rights; only later in the story does Isaac ask God to bless Jacob, an entreaty that was by no means guaranteed. Rather, the monk applies quotations from a number of New Testament passages to bolster his reading of Jacob as legitimate and divinely sanctioned heir.

Julian of Vézelay offers explicit social readings of two other Biblical sacrifices that feature on capitals within his monastic church: that of Abraham (fig. 30) and those of Cain and Abel. The former scene differs from some medieval versions in not including the sacrificial substitute of the Ram, focusing exclusively on the victim Isaac. By the twelfth century there was a long tradition of reading this Abrahamic legend as a precursor to the Crucifixion and the Mass,[53] for God had similarly offered his only son. By contrast, Julian's two discussions overlook the liturgical significance of the story to consider its social import. For one, the faith of Abraham, who knew that his son would not die, contrasts the disbelief that the monk believes characterizes the Jews.[54] Julian is by no means unique in this regard, for there was an established tradition of characterizing Jews as murderous and cold-hearted.[55] Such caricatures allowed Christians an avenue to describe their own faith in terms of love.

Second, Julian understands Abraham's sacrifice in terms of the vow of chastity, as offering one's heart to god.[56] This conflation sets the stage

---

[51] This is the Douay-Rheims translation.
[52] *Sermons*, 1: 304. Critics have pointed to the fact that Girard's understanding of ritual is deeply informed by Christianity and therefore not necessarily applicable to other cultures, including Kathryn McClymond, *Beyond Sacred Violence: A Comparative Study of Sacrifice* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008). For obvious reasons, such criticisms do not apply to the case at hand.
[53] Bâschet, *Le sein du père*.
[54] Julian of Vézelay, *Sermons*, 1: 198.
[55] For the artistic tradition related to this exegesis, see Lipton, *Images of Intolerance*; Mellinkoff, *Outcasts*; Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews*, 95–155.
[56] Julian of Vézelay, *Sermons*, 2: 418.

for a lengthy critique of village priests who live with concubines. The monk uses the violence of Old Testament sacrifices as a way to draw the lines of correct beliefs and practices. Similarly, the monk does not limit his critique of Cain to the charge of murdering his brother, but accuses him of a homosexual relationship with Lamech, which foreshadows the abominations of the people of Sodom.[57] Cain, who disobeyed God by failing to offer a blood sacrifice, becomes in Julian's sermon the monstrous figure of murderer *and* sexual deviant. Interestingly, two capitals at Vézelay show the death of Cain at the hands of the blind archer, Lamech. In both illustrations of this apocryphal tale, Cain cuts a rather monstrous figure with antlers sprouting from his head.

Monstrous bodies violate representational norms, just as ritual violence transgresses taboos, such as fathers murdering their sons. This interpretive model might help to account for the remarkable concentration of scenes of sacrifice and of monsters within the themes chosen for the sculpture of Vézelay. Both themes can be seen as attempts to define the contours of the social order. As noted above, Julian somewhat paradoxically used violent transgressions in various Old Testament stories as justifications for offering his own views on the proper social order. Analogously, the mixing activity so evident in monstrous bodies can be read as symptomatic of the monastic community's complex maneuvers to legitimize and articulate its role within a turbulent social context. But Girard's contention that all monsters are ultimately alike seems untenable in view of the substantial

[57]   Ibid., 1: 278.

artistic attention devoted to the articulation of monstrous forms. It is to these specific formal aspects of the monstrous that we now turn.

TOWARD A POETICS OF THE MONSTROUS

In a review of Lillian Randall's important monograph on marginalia in Gothic manuscripts, Schapiro offered a gentle critique of the notions that these imaginative paintings are merely decorative or that they might ultimately be shown to conform to a system that as yet remains unintelligible.[58] For Schapiro, an art historian must not make an either/or decision as to whether to regard fantastic imagery in Gothic painting as ornamental or symbolic. Rather, he suggested that a poetic approach, unbound by a combing of exegetical sources for the grounding of meaning, could be fruitful for considering the ubiquitous fantastic figures that manifest a "reservoir of humor, spirited play, and untamed vitality".

A poetics of Romanesque carvings of monsters holds much promise. At a fundamental level, sculptures often do not neatly align with the modern distinctions between decorative and historiated carvings. A nave capital at Vézelay features on both its corners the motif of a man crouched between two lions. Because similar capitals can be found elsewhere in Burgundy, including at Anzy-le-Duc, one might be tempted to interpret these repeated motifs in terms of a decorative pattern that is characteristic of regional monuments.[59] However, the inclusion of the inscription "Daniel in the Lions' Den" (DANIEL IN LACU LEONEM) on the Vézelay example makes the viewer consider these figural groupings in relationship to a unique historical event. Viewed from the perspective of poetics, an aesthetic repetition here supersedes the desire to render narrative events as discrete or unique.[60] History here is subjected to the logic of ornamental pattern.

Part of the fascination of images of monsters lies in their violation of representational norms. Klaus Niehr has argued that the articulation of forms in a thirteenth-century bronze aquamanile from Hildesheim in the shape of a siren violates the rules of aesthetic decorum that Horace espoused.[61] According to Niehr, the monster's elongated neck, small head, and distended body are deliberate transgressions of Classical conventions.

---

[58]   Schapiro's review of Lillian M.C. Randall, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966) appeared in *Speculum* 45 (1970): 684–86; rpt in Schapiro, *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art* (New York: Braziller, 1979), 197–98. More recently, see, for example, Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 47.

[59]   On repetition as characteristic of much ornament, see, for example, Gombrich, *Sense of Order*, 78–80.

[60]   Indeed, another capital along the same aisle features Daniel in the Lion's Den.

[61]   Klaus Niehr, "Horaz in Hildesheim: Zum Problem einer mittelalterlichen Kunsttheorie", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52 (1989): 1–24.

There is no doubt that many monks were familiar with Horace, but turning to ancient literature as foundational for twelfth-century aesthetics, can obscure the fact that monastic readers were often great writers in their own right. Imitation of Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and other Roman authors could be an ambition, but monks had other agendas as well. For example, ancient authors typically wrote verse quantitatively, based on short and long syllables.[62] This is evidence that these authors used Latin as a native, spoken language. By contrast, medieval authors wrote rhythmic verse, signaling that Latin was for them a second language. These monastic poems often employ extremely complex meters and recherché vocabulary, signaling a tremendous outpouring of effort.

Poetic themes extended to consideration of the monstrous, of which Nigel of Canterbury's versification of Jerome's *Vita Pauli*, discussed in the previous chapter, is but an example. An anonymous versification of a section of Isidore's *Etymologies* describes a dog-headed creature as follows:

> Heu, genus humanum vario portenta creavit
> > Crimine, que retinent horribiles species
> Unde canum capitis formam dicuntur habere
> > Quidam, quos sequitur moris ymago canum[63]

> Alas, a type of human created as a sign of various
> > Sins, which retain a horrible aspect
> Namely having a head in the shape of a dog
> > And whose habits likewise follow those of a dog.

Although this passage rehearses the standard trope of medieval teratology that monsters index human sin, it is rather remarkable in that it versifies that traditional knowledge. Indeed, monks widely regarded poetry as a suitable vehicle for understanding mundane and theological concerns, though these works did have to toe a conflicted line between a reveling in the aesthetics of verse on the one hand, and the desire for that creative activity to contribute to moral instruction on the other.[64]

Given the importance of poetry in cloistered communities, this art form doubtless informed what Michael Baxandall pithily referred to as the "period eye".[65] What monastic communities valued in poetry can perhaps shed some light into the specific terms of what is valued in the

---

[62] See the classic overview of Dag Norberg, *An Introduction to the Study of Medieval Latin Versification*, trans. Grant C. Roti and Jacqueline de La Chapelle Skubly (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 58–80.

[63] *Isidorus versificatus*: Christian Hünemörder, "Isidorus versificatus: ein anonyms Lehrgedicht über Monstra und Tiere aus dem 12. Jahrhundert", *Vivarium* 13, no. 2 (1975): 103–18, at 106.

[64] Willemien Otten and Karla Polmman, eds, *Poetry an Exegesis in Premodern Latin Christianity: The Encounter between Classical and Christian Strategies of Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1–7.

[65] On the concept of "period eye", see Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 29–40.

visual arts since the quotations of ancient poets could be used to justify twelfth-century art. The inscription on the bronze doors of St-Denis played on a phrase from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to exhort viewers to marvel at their craftsmanship and not their expense.[66] Though I would not posit a direct influence of poetry on sculpture, or vice versa, reading of poetry can yield insight into the specific terms that monks would have understood sculptures, including those of monsters. Such an approach can potentially construe monster carvings in positive terms, rather than as simply transgressions of norms of beauty. The following remarks can be understood as a prolegomena to such an approach, for a comprehensive study on the importance of poetry as a cultural activity remains to be published.[67] Moreover, many poems remain unpublished. Nevertheless, it is clear that Cluny was an important and longstanding center for poetry. In the tenth century, Abbot Odo (926–942) penned the 5580-line *Occupatio*, which articulates monastic ideals and dangerous temptations, including sodomy.[68] This literary tradition reached its pinnacle at the monastery in the twelfth century in the figure of Bernard of Cluny. His celebrated *De contemptu mundi* expresses the vanity of all earthly pleasures in an extremely complicated rhymed meter, known as the *tripertiti dactylici caudate*, over 2966 lines. This poetic tour de force was more than a display of virtuosity, for the monk tells us that the verses aimed to cultivate virtue in the reader:

> Quippe quod metrico carmine digestum edicitur et libentius auditur et avidius legitur, eoque facilius altae memoriae conmendatur. Quo fit ut dum specie versuum dum sonoritate verborum lector allicitur, ad exhibitionem eorum quae vel legerity vel audierit accendatur et accingatur. Et dum verborum elegantiam considerat efficaciam exerceat.

---

[66] "Aurem nec sumptus, operis mirare laborem", in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Chruch of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, 2nd edn, ed. and trans. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 46. Panofsky (p. 164) points out that this plays on Ovid's famous *materiam superabat opus* in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 2, 5.

[67] Discussions of Cluniac poetry include Scott Bruce, ed. and trans., "*Nunc homo, cras humus*: A Twelfth-Century Cluniac Poem on the Certainty of Death (Troyes, Médiathèque de l'Agglomération troyenne 918, fols. 78v–79v)", *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 95–96; See, for example, Max Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur der Mittelalters*, 3 vols (Munich: Beck, 1911–31), 2: 20–27; 3: 780–83; Norberg, *Medieval Latin Versification*, 38, 42, 61, 75; Pepin, ed. and trans., *De contemptu mundi*, xi–xxv; F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 310–19.

[68] Alex Baumans, "Original Sin, the History of Salvation and the Monastic Ideal of St. Odo of Cluny in His Occupatio", in *Serta Devota in memoriam Guillelmi Lourdaux*, ed. Werner Verbeke et al., 2 vols (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), 2: 335–57; Christopher Johnes, "Monastic Identity and Sodomitic Danger in the Occupatio by Odo of Cluny," *Speculum* 82 (2007): 1–53; Jan Ziolkowski, "The Occupatio by Odo of Cluny: A Poetic Manifesto of Monasticism in the Tenth Century", *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 24/25 (1989–1990): 559–67.

> In fact, what is published arranged in metrical verse is both heard more willingly and read more eagerly, and thus more easily committed to the profound memory. Wherefore it happens that while a reader is enticed by the form of the verses, by the melodiousness of the words, he is incited toward and made ready for the practice of things which either he read or heard. And while he contemplates the elegance of the words, let him practice their virtue.[69]

In this remarkable passage, Bernard draws attention to the ways in which verse can instill interest in the reader, aid in memory, and ultimately promote the path to virtue. The poet's attention to the mechanics of verse can help shape the successful pursuit of the religious life.

In addition to thematic inspiration, Bernard's *De Contemptu Mundi* repeatedly adopts the phraseology of an anonymous poem, composed at the end of the eleventh or in the early twelfth century.[70] These 72 lines begin with a lament on the transience of all earthly affairs, from the power of Julius Caesar, to the beauty of Helen and Absalom, to the wisdom of Plato. The remainder of the poem concentrates on descriptions of the decay of the flesh, which in many cases formally evoke the processes of transformation that they semantically describe. The second line of the poem, *nunc homo, cras humus* (today a man, tomorrow a human) has an echo in line 69: *Stercus, humus, cinis, aura sumus caro, fex. Homo sumus* (We are dung, dirt, ash, a breath, flesh, empty remains). The phonic resemblance between *homo* and *humus* here draws attention to the fleeting nature of existence, for through morphology the reader progresses linearly from "man" to "dirt". In contrast to the circular logic implicit in Genesis 3:19 "for dust though art, and into dust thou shalt return" (*quia pulvis es et in pulverem reverteris*), this anonymous verse radically emphasizes the evanescent nature of human existence.

Bernard's lesser-known poem *De octo vitiis*, which satirizes the vices, offers further insight into how the form of language can advance a thematic point. The poem can be dated fairly precisely because of its dedication to Pope Eugene III (1145–53) and, as in the *De Contemptu Mundi*, the work spurns the vanity of earthly pleasures through its use of repetitions and puns. Bernard dedicates many lines to argue that the sin of gluttony generally leads to lust, an idea brilliantly summed up in a single verse: *tunc uenus in uenis equandque uina uenenis* (when wines like venom are in the veins, then Venus is there too).[71]

Edgar De Bruyne argued that the repetition characteristic of twelfth-

---

[69] Pepin, ed. and trans., *De contemptu mundi*, 4–7. I follow the translation of these lines found in Bruce, ed. and trans., "*Nunc homo, cras humus*", 102.
[70] The edited version is in Bruce, ed. and trans., "*Nunc homo, cras humus*", 104–7.
[71] Pepin, "De Octo vitiis", 56–57.

century monastic verse contributed to its sweetness (*doceur*),[72] but I submit that for Bernard this aspect likewise serviced thematic ends, emphasizing the transitory nature of human existence. Repetitions in monastic poetry could likewise evoke positive transformations. The opening lines of Jotsaldus' dirge to Odilo, for example, stress that this virtuous man has conquered death and now enjoys eternal life.

> Odilo non moritur, sed mortis funera spernit.
> Odilo non moritur, sed viam duxit honestam.
> Odilo non moritur, sed vitam morte recepit.[73]'
>
> Odilo does not die, but scorns the funeral of death.
> Odilo does not die, but lead an honest life.
> Odilo does not die, but receives life through death.

The central Christian doctrine of eternal life is emphasized here by playing with the Latin root for death (*mort-*), a morphological transformation suggesting the promise of resurrection.

From this brief overview, one might posit a number of common interests between the aesthetics of Cluniac poetry and the articulation of the monstrous mixture of Vézelay. In general, Bernard's insistence on the importance of attention to form leading to deeper insights can be identified with respect to traditional Benedictine views in the visual arts. Abbot Suger, the most celebrated apologist for lavish expenditures in church decoration, believed that the material richness of artworks facilitated contemplation of the divine.[74] More specific intersections might be identified as well. First, as suggested above, poets felt free to appropriate verses from other sources and manipulate them in new contexts. Even if indebted to the past, writing poetry is a profoundly creative act.

The Vézelay monster similarly draws on established monstrous types in the creation of a new admixture, a representational strategy that allowed for an innovation that was, nevertheless, deeply imbued within the authority of tradition. This combinational strategy aligns with what Neil Stratford, echoing Berliner and Schapiro, has dubbed the "free invention" of Burgundian sculptors.[75] Among the examples he cites is a Cluny capital in the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, that combines antique motifs as diverse as Arion on his dolphin, Orpheus with his lyre, and fish inspired by floor mosaics. Such compositions, including the Frómista capital discussed in the previous chapter, do not

---

[72] *Ésthetique*, 2: 34. See also Raby, *Christian-Latin Poetry*, 315–19; F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 2: 49–54.

[73] Iotsald von Saint-Claude, *Vita des Abbates Odilo von Cluny*, ed. J. Staub, MGH SS 66 (Hanover: Hahn, 1998), 275.

[74] See, for example, Suger's celebrated comments on jewels and metalwork transporting his thoughts to the divine: Panofsky, ed. and trans., *Abbot Suger*, 62, 64.

[75] N. Stratford, "A Cluny Capital in Hartford (Connecticut)", *Gesta* 27 (1988): 9–21, at 11.

necessarily present narratives, but can inventively combine motifs into visually arresting scenes. It would be inaccurate to describe such works as visually ambiguous, for their forms are incredibly salient in their articulation, with, no ambiguity between the figure and ground. Rather, they are better described as indeterminate, because their referents, if any, are indiscernible.[76]

The sustained attention to formal detail could have religious significance for medieval viewers. By highlighting the intensity of labor, the carved forms of the Vézelay creature perhaps align with the desire for rich ornamentation of religious buildings, worthy of the House of God. That expensive works of art served to honor the creator was a common justification for the enormous sums of money spent on building projects.[77] Edgar De Bruyne, for one, long ago identified in medieval debates over the extravagant representations of monsters, parallels in ancient debates between Asianists, who advocated for an ornate style of rhetoric, and Attics, who valued pared down or sober speech.[78] Though the comparison is at best historically tenuous, it does highlight that differences of opinion as to how to honor the creator largely centered on questions of form. Debates between Cluniacs and Cistercians, for example, did not question the intentions or the sincerity of either side, taking for granted that all monks held a common desire for progress along a spiritual path,[79] but focused on the appropriate physical means for attaining that goal.

The very sculptured richness of the Vézelay monster aligns with the desire among traditional Benedictines for elaborateness in liturgical arts. Its formal elaborateness can be seen to align with the rich textiles, intricate metalwork, and other *ars sacra* that originally ornamented the space of the church. We would be mistaken, however, to see this as an uncomplicated desire. In the previous chapter, it was noted that Julian of Vézelay voiced anxiety over the lavishness of church decoration. Although he ultimately defended the practice, he clearly had misgivings about his luxurious surroundings. It may be that monstrous figures served to mitigate such concerns. A monster can adorn the house of God, but simultaneously manifest the monstrosity of this practice, including its lavish expense.

---

[76]   On the distinction between ambiguity and indeterminacy, see Judith Farr Tormey and Alan Tormey, "Art and Ambiguity", *Leonardo* 16, no. 3 (1983): 183–87. It has been suggested that painted inscriptions adjacent sculpture guided viewers in interpretations, but this is speculative.

[77]   Ellert Dahl, "*Dilexi decorum domus Dei*: Building to the Glory of God in the Middle Ages", *Acta ad archaeologiam et atrium historiam pertinentia*, alt. ser. 1 (1981): 157–90; Rudolph, *Artistic Change at St. Denis*, 26–31; idem, '*Things of Greater Importance*', 28–38.

[78]   Edgar de Bruyne, *Études d'esthétique médiévale* (Bruges: De Temple, 1946), 135–41.

[79]   Constable, *Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, 187–208; Kassius Hallinger, "Consuetudo: Begriff, Formen, Forschungsberichte, Inhalt", in *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Stift* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1980), 140–66; John Van Engen, "The 'Crisis of Cenobitism' Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050–1150", *Speculum* 61 (1986): 294–95.

The visual superfluity of this creature can simultaneously negotiate anxieties about and desires for elaborateness in the context of monastic ritual.[80] I have in mind here Bernard of Clairvaux's celebrated dismissal of "that ridiculous monstrosity… that deformed beauty and yet beautiful deformity" in Romanesque sculpture.[81] This phrase might be more than an apt formal description of an astute critic, for it potentially points to the ways in which carvings of monsters could have presented a self-critical monastic art.

Second, repetition of forms is embraced by monastic poets. Analagously, there are several capitals that feature a number of creatures with similar morphologies at Vézelay. The celebrated Pentecost portal includes a capital with a creature consists of a serpentine tail, avian feet, a torso with carefully delineated scales, and wings. Unfortunately, the head is damaged to the point that it is only possible to imagine its original appearance, but the general morphology, along with those of two other capitals in the nave, clearly resembles the capital under scrutiny here. Two other capitals likewise feature similar creatures, which engage in combat with humans. On another nave capital (fig. 31), sculptors transformed the figure of a grasshopper through the addition of a scaled fish tale. Another basilisk with a tail embellished with drill holes stands opposite this creature. In short, the sculptors of Vézelay articulated monstrous creatures through the combination of similar visual building blocks. I have argued elsewhere that morphological resemblances encourage an active engagement with sculpture, for the viewer is called upon to compare and contrast works as she moves through the space of the nave.[82]

Third, there is an interest in the transmogrification of forms in monastic poetry. While this could enhance the thematic content of a poem, in the case of the carving of the Vézelay monster it is difficult to specify the motive, for the sculpture cannot be associated with a discernible theme or narrative.[83] Perhaps the various figures comprising this scene represent a legend or folktale that has been lost or remains to be identified, but it strikes me as an unlikely possibility. There are many examples of combat scenes in Romanesque sculpture that do not rely upon a specific narrative, including two at Vézelay with monstrous creatures. Art historians typically interpret such scenes in allegorical terms, as illustrating the struggle

[80] I have in mind here Georges Bataille's two-edged notion of the "accursed share" in *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy*, Vol. 1, *Consumption*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1988).
[81] See the discussion of this passage in Chapter 3.
[82] Ambrose, *Nave Sculpture at Vézelay*, 73–86.
[83] It is possible that a now-lost painted inscription originally named this creature, but this strikes me as a remote possibility. For the contrary view see, for example, Lydwine Saulnier and Neil Stratford, *La sculpture oubliée de Vézelay* (Geneva: Droz, 1984), 77.

between good and evil.[84] In the example under consideration here, where demons appear to battle one another, Jean Adhémar identified a representation of the house of Satan divided.[85]

However, given the indeterminacy of the Vézelay capital, it is unclear that the transmogrifying forms of the monster's body necessarily encourage a moral reading. In a probing analysis of zoomorphs in Romanesque manuscript illuminations, Otto Pächt identified a penchant for the "kaleidoscopic" development of forms.[86] This technological metaphor deftly captured the ways in which many painted monsters appear to transmogrify from one type of animal into another, sometimes even into plants or interlaced lines. This analogy perhaps masks the fact that transmogrification of forms in medieval paintings arise from moving one's eyes across a painted page, a process very different from how a stationary eye observes the machinations of a kaleidoscope that produces changes in shapes and colors. In conflating the movement of the eye with that of a modern machine, Pächt's analysis arguably aligns with an interest in movement among early twentieth-century art historians, including Aby Warburg.[87] But, by the same token, the dynamism implicit in the metaphor has a certain potency with respect to sculpture, which the viewer must move around, to view it from multiple perspectives, in order to make sense of its imagery.

---

[84] See, for example, Angheben, *Chapiteaux romans de Bourgogne*, 245–314. For a sociological reading of scenes of combat, see Heyman, '*That Old Pride of the Men of the Auvergne*', 75–98.

[85] In Salet, *La Madeleine*, 122–23. Marcello Angheben speculates that the damaged portion of this work originally contained a small figure, who was tortured by the surrounding figures in *Le Patrimoine de la basilique de Vézelay* (Paris: Flohic, 1999), 104. There is no physical evidence to suggest this, nor are such profound discrepancies in scale of figures, which would be necessary, a feature of the nave capitals.

[86] Otto Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages: An Introduction*, trans. Kay Davenport (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), 45–94; idem, "The Pre-Carolingian Roots of Early Romanesque Art", in *Romanesque and Gothic Art*, Acts of the 20th International Congress of the History of Art, New York, 1961 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 1: 67–75. Cf. J. Baltrusaitis, *La stylistique ornementale dans la sculpture romane* (Paris: A. Colin, 1931).

[87] Philippe Alain Michaud argues that the notion of an image in motion, which came largely out of film, played an important part in the formation of the discipline of art history in the early twentieth century: *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, trans. Sophie Hawks (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 277–91.

In arranging forms across the three faces of the capital basket, the sculptors of Vézelay often anticipated the movement of the viewer to great effect. On a capital in the south aisle, a figure listens to flute music (fig. 32). The effect of this music is only apparent when one moves around the corner of the capital. As one does so, the man is transformed into a beast as his legs appear covered with hair from one angle. From this same angle, one discerns that the man gropes a woman, intimating that the music has spurred lustful thoughts. The motion of the viewer serves to unveil a moral message.

FIG. 32. FLUTE PLAYER, NAVE CAPITAL VÉZELAY

In the case of the monster capital, however, it is less clear how the motion of the viewer relates to the production of meaning. Rather, as the viewer moves around the faces of the capital, the forms of the monster seem to transmogrify from one beastly form to another without a clear message. It is perhaps useful in this regard to consider David Williams's argument that medieval monsters do not re-present some hidden truth so much as they manifest etiology.[88] In support of this claim, he points to Isidore of Seville's discussion of portents:

> Varro says that portents are things which seem to have been born contrary to nature, but in truth, they are not born contrary to nature, because they exist by the divine will, since the Creator's will is the nature of everything created … A portent, therefore, does not arise contrary to nature, but contrary to what nature is understood to be. Portents are also called 'signs,' monstrosities,' and 'prodigies' because they seem to portend and to point out, to demonstrate, and to future happenings.[89]

Isidore sees the monstrous as evidence of the divine creative force, of the power of making and begetting. One can add that this was not a distinctly Christian notion. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which were widely

[88] Williams, *Deformed Discourse*, 13.
[89] "Portenta esse Varro ait quae contra naturam nata videntur: sed non sunt contra naturam, quia divina voluntate fiunt, cum voluntas Creatoris cuiusque conditae rei natura sit. Vnde et ipsi gentiles Deum modo Naturam, modo Deum appellant. [2] Portentum ergo fit non contra naturam, sed contra quam est nota natura. Portenta autem et ostenta, monstra atque prodigia ideo nuncupantur, quod portendere atque ostendere, monstrare ac praedicare aliqua futura videntur", *Eytmologiae*, 11.3.1–2, http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/isidore/11.shtml.

read in the Middle Ages, similarly draw attention to change in nature, of which the protean form of monsters were but one manifestation.[90] Bynum has recently argued that the medieval understanding of matter itself was "*by definition* that which changes".[91]

The distinction between representation and presentation introduced in Isidore's text might be useful with respect to the monster of Vézelay, which does not represent a figure from tradition so much as it presents the artist's transformation of the limestone with his tools. In the case of representation, there is a debt or allegiance to history that must be honored, but in the second scenario the faculties of the individual play an even greater role. Indeed, encouragement of the imaginative faculty of the artist had some purchase in Benedictine circles, as evidenced by the artistic manual of Theophilus.[92] Accordingly, the creativity involved in making works of art parallels that of, and ultimately does homage to, the Creator. Georges Didi-Huberman has argued that there is potentially more at stake, claiming that at the center of medieval understanding of art making was the notion of the Incarnation, a concept that for him included the monstrous:

> Because the 'impossible' paradoxes of the Incarnation, under cover of divine transcendence, touched the very heart of an imminence that we might qualify, with Freud, as metapsychological – the imminence of this human capacity to invent impossible bodies … in order to know something of real flesh, of our mysterious, our incomprehensible flesh. The capacity is properly called the power of *figurability*.[93]

This capacity must not, Didi-Huberman argues, be conflated with intelligibility, for within a Christian context the work of art is symptomatic of a mystery that can never be fully revealed to reason.

The very unnameability of the Vézelay monster, which paradoxically is palpably constituted by a multitude of transmogrifying forms, perhaps

---

90   See, for example, Garth Tissol, *The Face of Nature: Wit, Narrative, and Cosmic Origins in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School Chartres* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 11.
91   Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 79.
92   John Van Engen, "Theophilus Presbyter and Rupert of Deutz: The Manual Arts and Benedictine Theology in the Early Twelfth Century", *Viator* 11 (1980): 147–63. See more recently Heidi Gearhart, "Theophilus' *On Diverse Arts*: The Persona of the Artist and the Production of Art in the Twelfth Century" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2010).
93   Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. John Goodman (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2005), 28. See also idem, "La Couleur de chair ou le paradoxe de Tertullien", *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse* 35 (1987): 9–49.
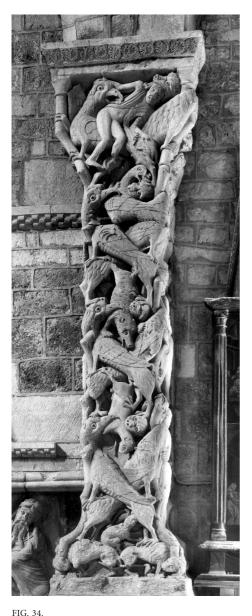
allegorizes the aporias of using human language to approach truth.[94] Unlike the creatures that receive allegorical readings in medieval bestiaries, this monster cannot easily be situated within a symbolic order. From the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville to nominalist debates in the twelfth century and beyond, there endured a fascination with exploring what the relationship between name and thing could reveal about Truth. This interest extended to the realm of the visual arts, as in a fresco at San Pietro in Valle of Adam naming the animals (fig. 33).[95] Somewhat unusual for medieval examples,[96] a griffin ranks among the various beasts of the painting. At home both in the air and on land, the mythological creature visually demarcates the boundary between the terrestrial and avian animals. In articulating this taxonomic distinction, the beast's body parallels the notion of Ambrose and Augustine, among others, that Adam demonstrated his reason by naming.[97] Indeed, reason or judgment (*iudice*)

---

[94] See also the discussion of this theme in Chapter 3.

[95] On the iconography of this painting, see Herbert Kessler, "Il ciclo di San Pietro in Valle: fonti e significato", in *Gli affreschi di San Pietro in Valle a Ferentillo: le storie dell'antico e del nuovo testament*, ed. G. Tamanti (Naples: Elekta Napoli, 2003), 99–100.

[96] A griffin features among the beasts Adam names in a Byzantine ivory (c. 1100), now in the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Cologne.

[97] Henry Maguire, "Adam and the Animals: Allegory and the Literal Sense in Early Christian Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987): 363–73; Xénia Muratova, "'Adam donne leurs noms aux animaux': L'iconographie de la scène dans l'art du Moyen Âge:

receives mention in the fresco's accompanying inscription, which proclaims that this faculty is a gift from God that endures with us.[98] Because the clarity of Adam's nomenclature vanished after the Tower of Babel fell, what names he gave creatures remained as irretrievable for medieval audiences as his shameless nudity in the Garden of Eden.[99]

Pointing to the limits of iconographic interpretations for much medieval art, Michael Camille argued for an "anti-iconography" of Romanesque sculpture in his analysis of the entangled and biting beasts of the trumeau of Souillac (fig. 34).[100] He advocated for an approach to medieval art that was less textually based and understood more in terms of the body and social relations. Unbound by any specific exegetical tradition, Camille believed that the maws of the beasts effectively evoked in the minds of medieval viewers a range of somatic associations, from the chewing of the Eucharistic host to erotic fantasies. Yet, as he imagined this sculpture as manifesting a diffuse array of historically specific bodily desires and anxieties, Camille paradoxically neglected the physicality of his object of study.[101] His description of the animals contains inaccuracies and, more significantly, he neglected an entire side of the trumeau, which features the Sacrifice of Isaac. This standard theme of medieval art was a staple of Romanesque sculptors, that is to stay that the trumeau adopts a stridently iconographic mode in its presentation.

FIG. 34.
INTERTWINED
ANIMALS,
MONSTERS
AND A HUMAN,
TRUMEAU,
SOUILLAC

les manuscrits des bestiaires enluminés du XIIe et du XIIIe siècles", *Studi medievali* 18 (1977): 367–94; eadem, "L'iconografia medievale e l''ambiente' storico", *Storia dell'arte* 28 (1976): 171–79.
98   Inscription as transcribed in Tamanti, ed., "… TIS … PLASTVS NOMINA PRVIDENS IVRE DI MANEANT SIC SICVT SEPER IN EVVM", 12.
99   Although anachronistic, Adam typically wears clothing in medieval representations of this scene.
100   Camille, "Mouths and Meanings", 43–57.
101   For an extended critique of this essay see Jérôme Bâschet, "Iconography beyond Iconography: Relational Meanings and Figures of Authority in the Reliefs of Souillac", in *Current Directions in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Sculpture Studies*, ed. R. Maxwell and K. Ambrose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 23–45.

Perhaps the "anti-iconographic" image of the beasts confronts or engages the communicative logic of the Abrahamic narrative that it abuts? In other words, the "anti-iconography" that Camille identifies on the main face could have potentially been invigorated with dialectical force, oscillating between an identifiable Biblical narrative that a long exegetical tradition on the one hand and, on the other, a riotous field of animal bodies that resists grounding in any single text. The trumeau presents a story of sacrifice of universal significance adjacent to a scene that engages the viewer in its physical particularities, with knotted bodies, gaping maws, and attenuated sinews. Viewed from this perspective, the Souillac trumeau might present a self-critical gesture on the physicality of all forms of representation and the necessity for the reader/viewer to engage that very physicality in order to achieve insights into truth.

Similar ideas can be identified throughout twelfth-century culture. Carruthers, Javelet, Leclerq, Illich, and others have identified in the very reading practices of monks a profound concern with the physicality of the text.[102] By articulating and ruminating over the physical sounds of words, a reader made a series of associative connections in his mind. In short, there was movement from the physical particularity of articulation to the transcendent. This interpretive strategy was perhaps most elegantly articulated in D.W. Robertson's analysis of Augustine's hermeneutics in *On Christian Doctrine* (*De Doctrina Christiana* 2, 67–8), in which the church father describes in graphic terms how the reader masticates the words of sacred texts in order to achieve insights.[103] There was widespread recognition that words and images represented abstract truths, but this was not necessarily to deny the importance of their material basis. Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, it was the very rumination on the very physicality of signs that afforded insights into universal truths.

The monster on the Vézelay capital can be seen to foster a similarly kinetic and interactive viewing. Its body extends around the right corner of the basket, and can never be fully apprehended from a single vantage point. Rather, the viewer must move around the capital basket, cobbling images from memory, in order to form a mental image of the beast in its entirety. The totality of this creature is never directly experienced by the viewer, but is a mental construction of various views, assembled in the viewer's mind. Yet, the carving does not aid in offering a resolution to this mental activity, offering a clear meaning or significance. It presents a singular body, rather than an established type of monster the meaning of

---

[102]   Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*; Illich, *In the Garden of the Text*, 51–65; Leclercq, *Love of Learning and Desire for God*, 72–73.
[103]   Robertson, *A Preface to Chaucer*, 52–137.

which, if any, is uncertain. In other words, this sculpture does not rehearse what is known, but presents something impenetrable, perhaps thereby succeeding in figuring the unnamable, in tracing the limits of the human intellect.

IMAGINING COSMOS 5

> To pontificate on the subject of monsters is in effect to take
> them seriously, to enter into their game; it is to be duped by
> their appearance instead of recognizing the human being who
> lurks behind the monstrous form.
>
> René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 253

The previous chapters of this volume have examined sculptures primarily from the regions of Auvergne, Burgundy, and Lyonnais, a selection that could be criticized for manifesting a Francophilism that continues to characterize much pedagogy and scholarship in Romanesque sculpture in the Anglo-American orbit. The present chapter breaks with this trend by turning to Portugal, home to more than 200 Romanesque sites that are virtually unknown, much less studied, outside that nation's borders.[1] Within the context of a study on monsters, which often occupy the physical or conceptual margins of works of art, there is perhaps something appropriate in mining the significance of sculptures in a region that has been marginalized in scholarship. But my motivations are more than reactionary, for monsters constitute a salient aspect of the decoration of Portuguese Romanesque monuments, perhaps more so than in any other region of Europe. Scores upon scores of imaginary creatures appear on capitals, corbels, and other surfaces of this kingdom's churches. This trend even holds true for the region's tympana, on which animals and monsters

---

[1]   In the only substantive scholarly discussion in English, Georgiana Goddard King argues that Portuguese churches lack the monumentality of Spanish examples and are indebted to Islamic or African sources: "Little Romanesque Churches in Portugal" in *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. Kingsley Porter*, 2 vols, ed. Wilhelm Reinhold and Walter Koehler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 1: 273–92. King deals only briefly with the sculpture of the sites she studies. Gerhard Graf published a substantial, two-volume survey in German, subsequently translated into French under the auspices of Zodiaque: Gerhard Graf, with José Mattoso and Manuel Luís Real, *Portugal roman*, 2 vols (La-Pierre-qui-Vire: Zodiaque, 1986).
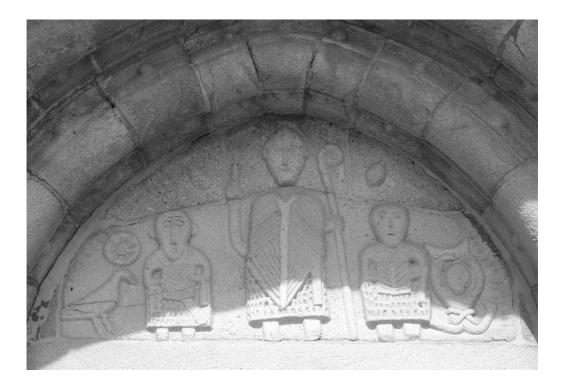
frequently appear, typically to the exclusion of human figures. The western portal of Nossa Senhora de Orada, for example, features a lion and harpy to either side of a palm tree. With no other details articulated within this sculptural field, the viewer's attention focuses largely on two beasts.
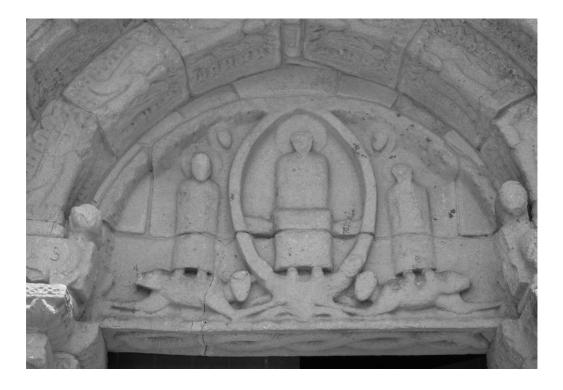
Portuguese scholars have long recognized the abundance of carvings of animals, both real and imaginary, among their nation's monuments, and have offered various interpretations. Manuel Real construed the many and varied creatures in carvings as manifesting the national character of Portuguese art.[2] José Mattoso detected a Benedictine imprint in, for example, the prevalence of the Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*) iconography, which he attributed to the influence of La-Charité-sur-Loire, a Burgundian institution that participated heavily in the reform of Portuguese monastic institutions during the twelfth century.[3] This imagery enjoyed particular favor in the region, with examples at Águias, Coimbra, Travanca, and other sites.[4] Implicit in these and other interpretations is the notion that

---

[2]   Manuel Real, "La sculpture figurative dans l'art roman du Portugal", in Graf, *Portugal roman*, 1: 33–74.
[3]   José Mattoso, "O românico beneditino em Portugal", *Ora et Labora* 1 (1954): 25–34ff.
[4]   Other examples of this iconography include Arnóia, Banho, Fonte Arcada, Paradela, Rates, and Rio Mau. Recently, Jorge Rodrigues argued that carvings of monsters served an apotropaic function: "A Escultura Românica", in *História da arte portuguesa*, ed. Paulo Pereira, 3 vols (Lisbon: Temas e Debates, 1995), 1: 291–96, 307–10.

animals and monsters played an important role in the construction of national or institutional identities.

This chapter develops this line of inquiry through the examination of the western portal of São Cristóvão de Rio Mau (fig. 35), which features humans and non-humans within the same field. A bird, perched beneath a floriated form occupies the tympanum's left corner, while in the opposite corner a siren with a knotted form at her waste holds a crescent above her head. These two creatures flank three humans. At center, a mitred bishop holds a crozier in his left hand and makes a benedictional gesture with his extremely oversized right hand. To either side of him deacons hold open codices, with columns of incised lines, doubtless visual shorthand for lines of text. Two ovoids near the apex of the carving, one to either side of the bishop's head, are the only other articulated forms within this field. Though their referent is uncertain, especially because of the weathering they have suffered, their shapes playfully respond to the circular forms carved throughout the adjacent archivolts.

The Rio Mau tympanum presents a singular vision, for it ranks among only five Portuguese tympana that include human figures; all four other examples represent Christ in Majesty.[5] The weathered west tympanum

---

[5]   A fragment from Rubiães shows Christ making a benedictional gesture within a mandorla flanked by floriate forms and a fragment from Sepins features Christ flanked by

of the important monastery of São Pedro de Rates (fig. 36) stands as the most complex arrangement: a haloed figure stands to either side of a seated Christ who tramples upon a prone figure, perhaps a sinner or heretic. Two haloed heads at the apex of the central mandorla, as well as the angels carved in the archivolt blocks, evoke a heavenly host. Aligned with iconographic conventions, only humanoids feature at Rates, as well as the other three sites featuring this scene. Unique in its presentation of animals and humans within the same field, the Rio Mau tympanum affords glimpses into some of the ideological motivations for the many representations of monsters throughout Portugal. It presents an animal and monster in relation to Church figures, this presenting a very different vision than the tympanum of Varax, discussed in the first chapter. Whereas the Varax tympanum idealizes a virtuous faun who exists outside the corrupting influences of civilization, the west tympanum of Rio Mau intertwines the animal and monstrous within an institutional framework. In the latter, the natural and the cultural are more or less reconciled.

Previous studies on Rio Mau's west tympanum have generally avoided a consideration of its significance, but rather have focused almost exclusively on an assessment of its techniques. In general, the relief carving within the tympanum is shallow, with forms articulated primarily through incisions, rather than modeled in three dimensions. This articulation of forms has been seen to index a lack of artistic skill: Arthur Kingsley Porter condemned this tympanum as "crude", Georges Gaillard considered it to be "simple", and Reynaldo dos Santos described it as "almost infantile".[6] The great historian of Portuguese art, Manuel Monteiro, cited Rio Mau as an example of the decline in technical skill that he believed characterized artistic production at the turn of the thirteenth century in Portugal.[7] Monteiro's project sought to give an account of the development of a national style, and the Rio Mau tympanum countermined his historical model. Even recent studies on Portuguese Romanesque tend to concentrate on what are deemed to be more technically accomplished works. In an important study on the implications of the rapidly shifting political landscape for our understanding of Romanesque churches, Manuel Luís

---

an angel and eagle. At Bravães two figures hold the mandorla, and the example at Anciães features the four evangelist symbols.

[6]   Arthur Kingsley Porter, *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture*, 2 vols (Florence: Pantheon, 1928), 2: 25; Georges Gaillard, "Aspects de l'art roman portugais", *Bracara Augusta* 16–17 (1964): 128–129; Reynaldo dos Santos, *O Românico em Portugal* (Lisbon: Editorial Sul, 1956), 69.

[7]   Manuel Monteiro, "O românico português: A igreja de S. Cristóvão de Rio-Mau", *Museu: Revista de Arte, Arqueologia, Tradições* 4 (1945): 25. Joaquim de Vasconcelos illustrates the tympanum in his important survey, but fails to include it among the list of monuments worth seeing in Portugal: *Arte religiosa em Portugal*, 2nd edn (Lisbon, 1994 [1915]).

Réal suspended his probing analysis to lament the lack of artistic merit in the Rio Mau tympanum.[8]

Such dismissive gestures implicitly rely upon a normative notion of aesthetics, excluding or marginalizing works deemed to be aberrant from perceived trends. As the work of James D'Emilio on Galicia and of Anabel Wharton on the territories fringing the Byzantine empire have persuasively argued, terms such as "provincial" can be construed in a positive sense, offering insight into how art responds to and interacts with the particularities of a region's history.[9] To be clear, I do not aim to identify in the Rio Mau tympanum something akin to a national character of sculpture, but subscribe to Diogo Ramada Curto's plea that we avoid the "specters of nationalism" that have haunted Portuguese histories.[10] To my mind a more productive approach can be found in Finbarr Flood's notion of "mixed upness", which he uses in reference to "Hindu-Muslim" encounters in medieval Sind.[11] Flood draws on Homi Bhabba's insistence that traditions stem from "complex and on-going negotiation" among various cultures.[12] Accordingly, artists can adopt and appropriate from myriad traditions and these borrowings almost inevitably have complex political and social implications, whether intracultural, intercultural, or both. These meanings can change from situation to situation; art is not guided by a coherent nationalistic genius. Flood counters the modernist

---

8   Manuel Luis Real, "O românico na perspectiva das relações internacionais", in *El Arte Románico en Galicia y Portugal/A Arte Românica em Portugal e Galiza*, ed. Xosé Carlos Valle Pérez and Jorge Rodrigues (À Corona: Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza; Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2001), 38. Elsewhere Real argues that political tensions in Portugal necessitated a mode of expression that was simple and direct for an unsophisticated public: "O Pórtico da Gloria e a escultura Portuguesa do seu tempo", in *Simposio Internacional sobre o Pórtico da Gloria e a Arte do seu Tempo: Actas simposio internacional, Santiago de Compostela, 3–8 Octubre de 1988* (Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 1991), 275.

9   James D'Emilio, "The Romanesque Churches of Galicia: The Making of a Provincial Art", in *IV Congreso Internacional de Estudios Galegos: Universidade de Oxford, 26–28 Setembro 1994* (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Galician Studies, 1997), 547–72; Annabel Jane Wharton, *Art of Empire: Painting and Architecture of the Byzantine Periphery: A Comparative Study of Four Provinces* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988). For an informative and sustained discussion of the cultural significance of a work often deemed aesthetically inferior, see Lawrence Nees, *The Gundohinus Gospels* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1987).

10   Diogo Ramada Curto, "Portuguese Navigations: The Pitfalls of National Histories", in *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, ed. Jay A. Leveson (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2007), 37.

11   Finbarr Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

12   Homi Bhabba, "Beyond the Pale: Art in the Age of Multicultural Translation," in *Cultural Diversity in the Arts: Art, Art Policies, and the Facelift of Europe*, ed. Ria Lavrijsen (Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute, 1993), 22, cited by Flood in *Objects of Translation*, 266. The complexities of intercultural exchange have garnered the attention of many scholars working on the Mediterranean region in the Middle Ages, including numerous publications by, among others, Anthony Cuttler, Cathleen Fleck, Jaroslav Folda, Heather Grossman, Cecily Hilsdale, Cynthia Robinson, Alicia Walker, and Yasser Tabbaa.

notion that past cultures were somehow "pure" and emphasizes the performative aspect of any cultural formation.

I argue in the following pages that the carving techniques, as well as the imagery, of Rio Mau's tympanum evoke an earlier chapter in Portugal's ecclesiastical history. What scholars have deemed to be the sculpture's very crudeness – a feature often associated with the monstrous – can be characterized as deliberate gestures that communicate positive aspects of the institution, especially its venerability. I conclude this chapter with a consideration of why medieval patrons and artists deemed recourse to a monster and animal desirable in figuring the sense of order that is so central to the conceptualization of this sculpture. Before presenting these arguments, however, it is instructive to sketch church–state relations in Portugal in some detail, for this history is little known to anglophone scholars and, in large part, it informs the agenda of artistic production at Rio Mau.

CHURCH–STATE RELATIONS IN TWELFTH-CENTURY PORTUGAL

The history of Portugal in the High Middle Ages can be construed in terms of broader currents of Latinization that swept Iberia during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[13] Burgundian institutions exerted a particularly heavy influence with respect to developments within Portugal, for monks from Cluny and La-Charité-sur-Loire tended to occupy key ecclesiastical positions. These profound regional ties can be linked to the fact that the first king of Portugal, Afonso Henrique (1109–85), was the son of Henry, Count of Burgundy. Over the course of the century, however, Afonso and his successors increasingly favored newer monastic orders, often at the expense of traditional institutions, such as the Augustinian house of Rio Mau.

The efforts to centralize political and patronage structures under Afonso had little precedent within the region. The departure of Roman officials effectively left a power vacuum in its wake. Even after the Umayyad invasion of Iberia in 711, petty nobles ruled over a patchwork of fiefdoms between the Minho and Mondego rivers. Administrative structure began to formalize in the wake of 1064, when King Fernando I of León and Castile (ca. 1015–1065) seized the city of Coimbra from Muslim rulers. Thereafter the county of Portugal was placed under royal administration.

---

[13]   The following remarks draw from Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London: Penguin, 1994); Stephen Lay, *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and Cultural Reorientation on the Medieval Frontier* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); José Mattoso, *Le monachisme ibérique et Cluny: Le monastères du diocese de Porto de l'an mille à 1200* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1968); Bernard Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065–1109* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

In 1090, King Alfonso VI (1040–1109) granted Galicia, a territory that included Portugal, to Raymond of Burgundy (d. 1107) on the occasion of his marriage to his sister, the Infanta Uracca. Shortly thereafter, in 1096, Alfonso named Henry of Burgundy count of Portugal upon his marriage to his daughter, the Infanta Teresa.

Alfonso appears to have had ulterior motivations for changing the comital overlord of Portugal so abruptly. Around the time of the 1093 death of his wife Constance, daughter of the Duke of Burgundy, Alfonso's only son, Sancho, was born to a Muslim concubine, Zaida of Seville. It remains unclear from medieval sources whether Sancho was the issue of an adulterous affair or whether Constance had died before Alfonso's liaison with Zaida. Regardless, given the lack of a tradition of primogeniture in the Iberian peninsula, Count Raymond could have made a reasonable claim to the throne through Uracca. Alfonso's territorial gift to Henry, Raymond's cousin, may have stemmed from a strategy to divide and conquer the interests of the Burgundian relatives in an effort to secure the throne for his son. Indeed, in 1107 the king publicly named Sancho his successor, though the youth was killed in battle by Moorish troops the following year at Uclés. Uracca became regent upon the death of her father.

Count Henry embraced his role as regent of Portugal with zeal, in part signaled by his generous support of several religious institutions. These acts of charity repeatedly manifested his Burgundian ties. He further placed Rates under the administrative jurisdiction of La-Charité-sur-Loire in 1100. While this conforms to a wider pattern in Iberia of turning to Cluniac institutions for aid in pursuing agendas of religious reform, Henry's choice seems to have had further motivations. The first appears to have been following family tradition, for Henry's grandfather, the count of Semur, had patronized La-Charité-sur-Loire. The second may have been political, an attempt to distinguish himself from the kings of León, who had been significant donors to Cluny, employing monks from the motherhouse in their effort to reform Spanish monasteries.[14] Whatever the motivations, Henry's loyalty to La-Charité endured, as when in the following year he donated the house of Santa Justa de Coimbra to La Charité, with Maurice Boudin working on his behalf.[15]

---

[14]   C.J. Bishko, "The Cluniac Priories of Galicia and Portugal: Their Acquisition and Administration, 1075–ca. 1230", *Studia Monastica* 7 (1965): 314, rpt in C.J. Bishko, *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History, 600–1300* (Farnham: Ashgate, 1984), 314. See also the discussion in idem, "Count Henry of Portugal, Cluny and the Antecedents of the Pacto Sucessório", *Revista Portuguesa de Historia* 13 (1981): 180–81, rpt in Bishko, *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History*, 180–81.

[15]   Bishko, "Cluniac Priories", 315. See also *Documentos Medievais Portugueses. Documentos Regios*, ed. R. de Azevedo (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1958), 1: 10.

It is against the backdrop of this patronage pattern that several art historians have identified a distinctively Burgundian iconography in several early Romanesque Portuguese churches, including Rates.[16] Manuel Luís Réal, for one, argued that many of the monsters on the capitals at Rates drew from Burgundian examples, including works at St-Révérien and Bois-Ste-Marie.[17] He further suggested that the French-inspired motifs at Rates perhaps mark a conscious effort on the part of Portuguese patrons to distinguish themselves from the Galician decorative vocabulary to the north.[18] While an intriguing thesis, it must be admitted that not enough early Romanesque monuments survive from the turn of the twelfth century to support any strong conclusions about broad trends.

What is more, secular interests did not always neatly align with ecclesiastical concerns. Perhaps most saliently, diocesan and lay political boundaries did not correspond: the archbishops of Santiago de Compostela and Toledo had suffragans within Portugal. The venerable see of Braga in northern Portugal is instructive in the competing allegiances that could arise within such a political landscape. During the early decades of the twelfth century, Bishop Bernard of Toledo, originally from Gascony and a former monk of Cluny, installed Gerard, who had served as a monk at Moissac, as bishop of Braga (1096–1108), a metropolitan see within Portugal.[19] Gerard successfully fought to reestablish and enhance the metropolitan rights of Braga, a project that could be seen to complement Afonso Henrique's political agenda, but he was likewise a staunch opponent of simony and sought to limit royal interference in Church affairs. His successor, Maurice Bourdin (1109–1118), was likewise a Frenchman educated at Cluny, but came to be more sympathetic to goals of secular rulers. During his conflict with Pope Paschal II, living in exile in Benevento, Emperor Henry V installed Maurice as Pope Gregory VIII. The former archbishop of Braga, whom Pope Paschal had briefly suspended in 1111, came to distance himself from the ideals of the Gregorian Reform to espouse imperial prerogatives.

Count Henry's son, Afonso Henrique (1109–85), was generally fortunate in that the ambitions of church and state largely complemented one another during his long reign. Afonso Henrique pronounced himself as the first king of Portugal in 1128, after defeating his mother in the battle of São Mamede. To bolster his tenuous position, especially vis-à-vis the kings of León, who had ruled the county of Portugal for roughly seventy-five

---

[16]   See, for example, Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida, "Influências Francesas na Arte Românica Portuguesa", *Histoire du Portugal, Histoire Européene. Actes du Colloque (1986)* (Lisbon/Paris: F.C.G, 1987), 27–36. See also José Mattoso, *Portugal médiéval: novas interpretações*. (Lisbon: Imprensa nacional, 1985), 365–87.

[17]   Real, "Portico da Gloria", n. 9.

[18]   Real, "Românico Português", 30–55; idem, "Pórtico da Gloria".

[19]   Mattoso, *Monachisme ibérique et Cluny*, 103–05.

years, he sought to build numerous trans-Pyrenean alliances. He married one of his daughters to the king of Denmark, involved French monasteries in religious reforms, and appealed to the popes for decades before they finally recognized the legitimacy of his royal title in 1179. This fifty-one-year delay signals a circumspection on the part of the papacy that was appropriate within the complex political situation of the region.

For much of the twelfth century church officials in Portugal sought to establish their independence vis-à-vis other sees in the Iberian peninsula, especially Santiago-de-Compostela and Toledo. Archbishop João Peculiar (bp. 1138–75), for example, unflaggingly championed the rights and privileges associated with the metropolitan status of Braga, even claiming several Leonese bishops as suffragans. These ongoing power struggles within the church, which resulted in constant reshufflings of hierarchies, was likewise taken up by his successor Archbishop Godinho (1176–88). Afonso Henrique obviously recognized the advantage of having strong ecclesiastical centers that could advance his secular ambitions. His lavish patronage of the Augustinian house of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, founded in 1132, resulted in this monastery rapidly becoming recognized as an international center of learning. As he pushed Portugal's political border southward in a Reconquest campaign that often enjoyed papal endorsement as Crusades, he donated lands to newly founded monasteries, typically Cistercian. The agricultural projects that these monks pursued helped encourage settlement in newly conquered lands that were often sparsely populated. Yet the situation with monasteries, especially old centers, could likewise be tenuous. José Mattoso succinctly summed up the fraught social situation that religious institutions faced after the consolidation of Afonso Henrique's royal power: "after 1139 relationships between patrons and monks were increasingly focused on economic interests: from the protectors which they had been, patrons became a burden to support, or even a threat to keep at bay".[20] Moreover, Mattoso argues that the monarchy increasingly favored the rights of patrons over those of religious communities, effectively using laymen as a protective screen from the claims of the Church.

Such a strategy became increasingly important toward the end of the twelfth century. Urban III, who became pope in 1198, changed Rome's policy toward Iberia. Whereas most twelfth-century popes tended to adopt a pragmatic and conciliatory position with respect to the Iberian Church, which they considered to be instrumental for the Reconquest, Urban adopted a policy that put Roman primacy at its center and, by

[20] "Après 1139 les relations entre patrons et moines sont de plus en plus dominées par les intérêts économiques: de protecteurs qu'ils étaient, les patrons deviennent un poids à soutenir, voire une menace à écarter", in Mattoso, *Monachisme iberique et Cluny*, 94. For conflicts between monasteries and the Portuguese nobility, see also Mattoso, *Portugal médiéval*.

extension, had little regard for adhering to the political boundaries that secular leaders observed. For example, Urban placed the newly founded sees at the southern frontier of Portugal under the administrative authority of Santiago-de-Compostela, not Braga. Indeed, the rapid southward territorial expansion of Portugal over the course of the twelfth century did nothing to extend the administrative purview or prestige of the metropolitan see of Braga.

Likewise Afonso Henrique's son, King Sancho, tended to gravitate toward patronage of new orders over traditional Augustinian and Benedictine houses. Three military orders emerged in western Iberia over the course of the second half of the twelfth century: Santiago of the Sword, Calatrava, and Évora. Sancho supported all three, especially the last as an ally in the military campaigns in the south. He likewise embraced two relatively new foreign orders, the Templars and the Cistercians. The Templars effectively became part of a national army, advancing the southward expansion of the Portuguese border into Muslim-held territories. The Cistercians, who were willing to eke out an existence in undeveloped lands, could likewise assist in these expansionary efforts. Alcobaça, which would eventually become one of the most glorious monasteries in Europe, was founded in 1153 by a land grant from Afonso Henrique, who had recently captured territories bordering the River Tagus. The Cistercians expanded their presence in Portugal at the turn of the thirteenth century by converting traditional Benedictine and Augustinian houses and bringing them under their control. The widespread perception that Cistercian observances were particularly rigorous made them attractive to rulers seeking to have prestigious religious institutions within their realms. The important monasteries of Pombeira and Castro de Avelãs, for example, were forcibly converted to Cistercian observances against the will of these communities. Sancho instigated both of these reforms, which demonstrated very little regard for institutional traditions.

TRADITIONALISM AT RIO MAU

With waning royal funding of traditional monastic houses around the year 1200, communities like Rio Mau, which continued to observe the rule of Augustine, could look back with envy to the patronage enjoyed by traditional religious communities roughly one hundred years earlier. This period witnessed Count Henry of Burgundy offering gifts that enabled the large-scale and heavily decorated church at Rates, located only some three kilometers from Rio Mau. The traditionalism that can be identified in various aspects of the sculpture and architecture of the later church, including its monsters, can be seen as part of a broader effort to claim a mantle of venerability within the fabric of the church building.

An inscription on the interior west wall of Rio Mau's choir indicates that a priest named Pedro Dias began construction on the present

building in 1152.[21] Pedro Dias's campaign appears to have been limited to the choir, for substantial differences exist between this space and the construction techniques employed in the nave. The windowless nave features unarticulated walls consisting of blocks that are dressed much more roughly than those of the choir, which, despite its modest scale, features sophisticated architecture, including engaged columns that support robustly carved capitals, an elaborate dentil molding, and arcuated windows. Manuel Luís Réal characterized the choir capitals as precocious in relationship to other sculpture in the Minho valley.[22] The plastic modeling results in forms that extend away from the capital basket, such as grimacing lions (fig. 39). Such sculptures formally resemble Galician examples and it may be that sculptors from this region, immediately to the north, worked in the Rio Mau choir.

Two scenarios are possible: either the nave marks a later campaign or Pedro Dias's apse adjoined an existing structure. In support of the latter thesis, Gerhard Graf pointed out that construction techniques of the nave resemble those of the eleventh-century Santa-Cruz in Coimbra, though they are more crudely executed at Rio Mau.[23] Even the rosy color of the granite of the east end of the church contrasts the brownish, muddy color of the nave blocks. A more thorough archeological study of the nave could shed further light on the question of dating, but what little is known of the history of this Augustinian house could support the thesis that portions of the nave date to the late eleventh or early twelfth century. In 1103, Pala Pais made a donation to Abbot Odoairo, an event that has been interpreted to mean that a church was already in existence at Rio Mau. In 1122, and again in 1161, Ousenda Soares made gifts to the church.

Despite the presence of some indicators for an early date for the nave, Graf concluded that the current structure probably stems from a second campaign at the turn of the thirteenth century, and, following Monteiro, suggested that the crude building style of the nave perhaps indexed the waning economic fortunes of the monastery.[24] Supporting evidence for this thesis includes the ogival profile of the archivolts surrounding the tympana of the west and north walls, contrasting the round profile of arches in Pedro Dias's choir. In short, it seems likely that construction of the nave probably dates to around 1200, completing the renovation project begun by Pedro Dias.

---

[21]   IN ERA MCLXXXVIIII PETRUS DIDACI INDIGNUS SACERDOS CEPIT EDIFICARE ECCLESIAM ISTAM IN ONORE S[AN]C[T]I X TOFORUS.

[22]   Manuel Luis Real, "La sculpture figurative dans l'art roman du Portugal", in Graf et al., *Portugal roman*, 1: 40–42.

[23]   Graf, *Portugal roman*, 2: 107. Graf provides a review of textual sources relating to Rio Mau.

[24]   Graf, *Portugal roman*, 2: 107. Graf relies here on the arguments of Monteiro, "O românico português", 22.

FIG. 37.
GRIFFINS, NORTH
TYMPANUM, RIO
MAU

What Graf identified as archaizing masonry techniques may be more than simply a sign of a waning economy. Indeed, another carving at Rio Mau suggests a more complex scenario of artistic production around the year 1200. Along the north wall of the nave, there is a door surmounted by a tympanum featuring two confronted griffins (fig. 37). The sensitive modeling of these monsters is apparent despite the abrasions the carving has suffered, and suggests the hand of a rather skilled worker. Moreover, the ogival profile of this sculpture resembles that of the west tympanum, further suggesting that these two works were carved at roughly the same time.

It appears that contemporary artists adopted two visual modes of representation: that of the north tympanum is rather sophisticated in its articulation of forms, and the other, manifest in the west tympanum, renders forms in a less modeled fashion. I suggest that the latter mode of representation may be deliberately archaizing and has an analogue in the masonry techniques of the nave, which, as Graf noted, have parallels in eleventh-century buildings of the region. Moreover, the sculptors of Rio Mau's west tympanum appropriated a number of sculptural motifs from the past: birds feature throughout Rates's nave sculpture and a siren appears on a capital of the west façade. Perhaps most remarkably, the reverse of Rio Mau's west tympanum, on which an *Agnus Dei* holds a

staff terminating in a cross, has to my knowledge a unique parallel on the reverse of the west tympanum of Rates (fig. 38). Both feature a network of incised cross-hatchings, perhaps conveying locks of hair, to articulate the forms of a lamb. The only significant difference between the two works is the inclusion at Rates of two haloed figures whose identities are indecipherable.[25] The shared use of a "crude" style in these two works is striking, and a notable feature of the west tympanum of Rio Mau is how markedly its carving technique differs from the site's other monumental sculptures, including the choir capitals.

Several tympana in Galicia display churchmen in similarly hieratic fashion to the west Rio Mau tympanum. The west portal of San Martiño de Moaña in Pontevedra, for example, features a centrally positioned bishop flanked by two figures to either side, one standing and one seated. Each figure is placed under an arch within an arcade. Though later in date, the closest parallel to the Rio Mau tympanum may be the thirteenth-century south portal of San Pedro de Portomarín, which features three ecclesiastics without halos.[26] Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras argues that this

---

[25] Graf sees this as a direct quotation of Rates in *Portugal roman*, 2: 113.
[26] Monsters occupy a few of the capitals of this portal, but because of stylistic differences these were probably carved by different sculptors and may not have been conceived in direct relationship to the central tympanum.

group of tympana conforms to a wider pattern in Galicia, of a shift away from narrative imagery in the second half of the twelfth century to hieratic images that emphasize the sacral quality of the Church.[27] Yet the absence of halos in many of these carvings, which typically lavish attention on the articulation of ecclesiastical vestments, might be more specifically interpreted as conveying a more institutionally oriented vision, rather than a strictly sacral message.

The Rio Mau bishop may represent a historical personage. Augustine is a probable candidate because Rio Mau, as did so many Portuguese institutions in the twelfth century, observed his Rule. Alternatively, Christopher, the monastery's patron saint, was likewise a bishop.[28] Neither of these identifications can be confirmed because the figure holds no attributes. Moreover, the sculptor broadly treated forms within the face, in contrast to the more specific rendering of articles of clothing associated with the office. The same shift in description may be observed in the deacons to either side, where more attention is given to vestments than to physiognomy.

In view of this pattern of varied artistic attention, these figures can be seen to represent generic figures of a bishop and deacons, without any attempt to specify identity. Such an idea has parallels in medieval conceptions of ecclesiastical offices. Countering Donatist claims for the need for priestly purity, Augustine repeatedly argued that the efficacy of a ritual was not rooted in an individual's moral stature, but through the eternal Church, sanctioned by God.[29] In his influential conception of ecclesiastical administration, Gregory the Great repeatedly emphasized the notion of "right order" (*rectus ordo*), which emphasized a "committed, trained, and professional clergy".[30] Such notions of the clergy, which emphasize the importance of office over the individual, could extend to artistic representations. Michael Cothren and Thomas Dale have emphasized the importance of office in informing twelfth- and thirteenth-century conceptions of portraiture.[31] During the High Middle Ages, this ambition to highlight an office typically trumped any desire to offer a likeness of a given individual.

[27]   Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras, "Ritos, signos y visions: El Tímpano Románico en Galicia (1157–1230)", in *El Tímpano Románico: Imágines, Estructuras y Audiencias*, ed. Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras and José Luis Senra (Santiago de Compostela Xunta de Galicia: Xunta de Galicia, 2003), 47–71.

[28]   For this argument see, for example, Monteiro, "O românico português", 24.

[29]   See, for example, Augustine, *City of God*, 20.26.

[30]   G.R. Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 122.

[31]   Michael Cothren, "Who is the Bishop in the Virgin Chapel of Beauvais Cathedral?", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, 125 (1995): 1–16; Dale, "The Individual, the Resurrected Body and Romanesque Portraiture". For discussion of notions of portraiture in later Middle Ages, see also Stephen Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King: A Prehistory of Portraiture in Late Medieval France* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Irrespective of questions of identity, the bishop's vestments have an archaizing quality, especially the miter, which culminates in a point. This shape was used prior to the year 1100, when this headgear became increasingly curvilinear in profile, sometimes in an uninterrupted dome or sometimes with a slight depression at the apex.[32] It might be argued that such changes in fashion may have been slower to take root in Portugal, at a rather removed corner of Western Christendom. However, given the profound ties with important centers in France, this seems unlikely. More probably, the sculptor consciously adopted an antiquated sartorial model. In either scenario, tradition played an important role in the attributes selected for the bishop's costume.

The "crude" style of the tympanum likewise may have been deliberately archaizing, for it resembles the usual vocabulary of early carvings in Portugal.[33] This is not an isolated instance of this representational strategy, for gestures to pictorial conventions were a hallmark of the working practices of Portuguese sculptors around the year 1200. The ubiquitous use of *Agnus Dei* imagery in Portuguese tympana, noted earlier, can be characterized as having something formulaic or emblematic in their articulation because almost all feature a lamb holding a triumphal cross. Yet, the repetition of these motifs serves to visually embed each church within the network of the Church. Similarly, the bicorporates on the archivolts of the west portal of Pombeira, dating to the early thirteenth century, share much with examples carved nearly one hundred years earlier, including in the nave arcade of Rates. In short, there was a broader pattern of conservatism in the selection of sculptural themes in northern Portuguese churches around the year 1200.

Evocation of traditional modes of representation in the Rio Mau tympanum might even inform the inclusion of the bird and siren. Monteiro argued that the sculptor of this tympanum may have looked to a pre-Romanesque model and identified a cosmology in which the siren represented water, and the bird, which he identified as an eagle, signified spirit.[34] It bears noting that the Portuguese scholar shifted his interpretation of these creatures in other sculptural ensembles. He suggested that a bird and siren at Braga cathedral are best understood as symbols of redemption.[35] While iconographic readings are not necessarily

---

[32] O.J. Blum, "Miter", in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 9: 981–82; Walter Ullman, *The Growth of the Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (London: Methuen, 1962), 312–13.

[33] Portuguese sculptors occasionally did reuse eleventh-century tympana, perhaps out of practicality, but perhaps out of a sense of traditionalism as well. This seems to be the case on this example at São Pedro de Cete, which forms part of the portal between the cloister and the south side of the church, built in the late twelfth century, and which leads to a prominent tomb.

[34] Monteiro, "O românico português", 24.

[35] Manuel Monteiro, *A Escultura românica em Portugal: Os temas historiados da porta principal da Sé de Braga* (Porto: Tavares Martin, 1938).

FIG. 39. LIONS,
APSE CAPITAL,
RIO MAU

exclusive or irreconcilable, the variety of interpretations Monteiro offered for the same animals points to the difficulties in linking them with specific meanings.

Medieval sources provide widely divergent interpretations of birds and sirens. Several authors associated birds in general with political freedom because of their ability to fly.[36] In Galician and Portuguese poetry, birds often function as allegories of condemned practices, from priests' womanizing to magical rituals.[37] Bestiaries glossed the behaviors of specific birds as having import for human affairs: coots are paragons of motherhood; doves remind us that by good works we come closer to god; eagles exhort us to lift our minds toward god, and so on.[38] Yet, the generalized rendering of the bird at Rio Mau obviates the identification of a specific species, and, by extension, a narrowly defined interpretation in the manner of the bestiaries. But the visual marginalization within the tympanum of the siren and bird might be construed along moral lines: the churchmen at center displace vice. This can only stand as a conjectural reading, for nothing within the carving suggests that these creatures menace or harass the clerics, or that they are inversions or debasements of the human figures. These creatures further lack the ominous quality of monstrous creatures at the edges of some medieval maps.[39] While sirens were widely associated with lasciviousness and deceit, medieval authors did not consistently approach them from a negative moralizing perspective.[40]

Although the siren and bird may have conveyed a symbolic message, it is perhaps most significant that examples of these creatures abound among the region's ecclesiastical ornaments. A siren features on a capital on the west façade of Rates and birds feature on several carvings throughout the

---

[36] Dorothy Yamamoto, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 34–55.

[37] Benjamin Liu, *Medieval Joke Poetry: The* Cantigas d'Escarnho e de Mal Dizer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 35–57.

[38] *The Book of Beasts: Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth-Century*, trans. T.H. White (New York: Dover, 1984), 103–61.

[39] The many discussions of this phenomenon include Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 21–66; Friedman, *Monstrous Races*; Katzenellenbogen, "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay"; Strickland, *Demons, Saracens and Jews*.

[40] Rossana Cardani, "La sirena nel San Vittore di Muralto: una nota sugli animali marini nella scultura romanica", *Unsere Kunstdenkmäler* 40 (1989): 393–401; Leclercq-Marx, *Sirène dans la pensée et dans l'art*; Travis, "Of Sirens and Otocentaurs".

church (fig. 40). Along similar lines, the griffins of the north tympanum of Rio Mau are in keeping with the ornamental lingua franca of Mediterranean culture, associated with luxury goods.[41] Given the broad treatment of forms at Rio Mau, I believe it would be unprofitable to identify an attempt to evoke specific Islamic, Christian, or African aesthetic models. Rather, it is the gesture toward tradition that seems most salient in this context.

BESTIAL ORDER

Despite the many gestures toward tradition observable in Rio Mau's west tympanum, it bears stressing how imaginative this scene is, without any direct parallel in Iberian art. In characterizing the motivations for this innovative vision, I agree with Monteiro that the articulation of a cosmological order was of paramount concern. The carving maps the mundane realm through its inclusion of creatures from the three spheres: air (birds), earth (humans), and sea (sirens). Such tripartite division finds scriptural grounding in the first chapter of Genesis, which relates that God created the birds and fishes on the fifth day, and on the sixth day the creatures of the earth, including man. Such divisions commonly feature within contemporary Bible miniatures.[42] Additional features of the Rio Mau tympanum further invoke the firmament. In keeping with Iberian pictorial conventions, the floriate form above the bird can be seen to evoke

FIG. 40. BIRDS, CAPITAL OF NORTH PORTAL, RATES

---

[41] See, for example, Eukene Martinez de Lagos Fernandez, "Las luchas de centauros y sirenas en los templos medievales navarros", *Cuadernos de arte e iconografía* 11 (1993): 160–72. In another context, Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx argues that the many carved sirens in Lombardy functioned as a "marque générique d'atelier" in "De Pavie à Zagósc: La sirène comme motif de predilection des sculpteurs 'lombards' au XIIe siècle", *Arte Lombarda*, n.s., 140, no. 1 (2004): 24–32. The great stylistic variations among examples of sirens and birds in Portugal speak against a similar thesis.

[42] For example, the seven roundels of the incipit initial to Genesis in the Lobbes Bible correspond to the seven days of creation: the fifth features a sea full of fish and a blue sky filled with birds and the sixth shows Christ Logos fashioning Adam in the presence of three quadrupeds. Tournai, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, Ms. 1, fol. 6, illustrated in Walter Cahn, *Romanesque Bible Illumination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 130, fig. 84. Similar examples of this iconography include London, British Library Harley 4772, fol. 5, illustrated in Cahn, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, 1: 184, pl. VI; Michaelbeuern, Stifsbibliothek, Cod. Perg. 1, fol. 6, illustrated in Cahn, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, 1: 158, fig. 116.

the sun or the stars, and the crescent held aloft by the siren evokes the moon.[43]

In considering what representations of beasts could contribute to this project of offering a vision of a natural order, I am less concerned with the potential symbolic significance of the bird and siren of the tympanum, than what these creatures contribute to the work's syntactic logic. Such an approach finds support in Hugh of Fouilloy's *Aviarium*, perhaps the most extensive and sustained interpretation of birds during the Middle Ages, composed during his tenure as prior of St-Nicolas-de-Regny, near Amiens. Significantly for present purposes, three, perhaps even four, of the earliest extant copies of this text in were produced in Portugal around the year 1200.[44] Drawing heavily on Biblical and patristic sources, Hugh offers moral teachings based on the observation of birds, primarily for the benefit of the unlettered. In his prologue to Ranier, identified as a lay brother, Hugh frames this project in institutional terms, employing an avian metaphor:

> See how the hawk and the dove sit on the same perch. I am from the clergy and you from the military. We come to conversion so that we may sit within the life of the Rule, as though on a perch; and so that you who were accustomed to seizing domestic fowl, now with the hand of good deeds may bring to conversion the wild ones, that is, laymen.[45]

Hugh's grounding of the social orders in terms of observations from nature is by no means an isolated phenomenon, for the natural world offered medieval thinkers an avenue to understand humans' place within the cosmos. Two examples suffice to illustrate this trend. In Bernard Sylvester's *Cosmographia*, Noys, the personification of divine providence, fashions the universe and

> when the earth stood firm beneath the heavens, the sea ebbed and flowed, and the starry ether gave off a new radiance, the beasts of the field and the reptiles, winged creatures, and fishes

---

[43]   See, for example, the floriate forms used to render the sun and stars in a miniature of the *Woman Clothed in the Sun* and *the Dragon* in the Morgan Beatus (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 644, fol. 152v–153). Other sites in Portugal include carved images of the sun and moon, such as Paço de Sousa, Fonte Arcada, and Algonzinho, which Jorge Rodrigues reads in terms of an eschatological message ("A Escultura Românica", 1: 273–74).

[44]   Hugh of Fouilloy, *Aviarium. The Medieval Book of Birds*, ed. and trans. Willene B. Clark (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992), 40–51.

[45]   "Ecce in eadem pertica sedent accipiter et columba. Ego enim de clero, tu de militia. Ad conversionem venimus ut in regulari vita quasi in pertica sedeamus; et qui rapere consueveras domesticas aves, nunc bonae operationis manu silvestres ad conversionem trahas, id est saeculares", *Medieval Book of Birds*, ed. Clark, 118–19.

were made, and took over the regions proper to their diverse conditions.[46]

The tension within Bernard's highly ordered cosmology arises from human sin. To reclaim their original position within the divinely authored order, as described in Genesis,[47] the theologian sees the need for reform, including of human institutions, to establish an order more harmoniously aligned with nature.[48]

Drawing heavily on Bernard's imagery, Alan of Lille's *Plaint of Nature* offers an elaborate description of the tunic worn by the personification of Nature. This fantastic garment represents a cosmology, which includes scenes of the heavens, the "airial city" full of birds, and the ocean teeming with fish, including a siren that is described as "a fish in the loins, was seen to have a human face".[49] Alan ends his description with the portion of the costume that evokes the terrestrial sphere:

> the material heavier, sought to approximate the element, earth. On the first section, man, divesting himself of the indolence of self-indulgence, tried to run a straight course through the secrets of the heavens with reason as charioteer. In this section the tunic had suffered a rending of its parts and showed the effects of injuries and insults. In the other sections, however, the parts had sustained no injury from division or discord in the beautiful harmony of their unbroken surface. In these a kind of magic picture made land animals come alive.[50]

A description of various land animals follows in which humans are unique among fauna in that they transgress the established natural order through their sins. Redemption is possible through observance of natural laws, by taking their ordained place within the hierarchy of being, which can be discerned by reason.

Marie-Dominique Chenu, Tullio Gregory, and Winthrop Wetherbee, among other intellectual historians, have identified a proto-scientific attitude toward nature, according to which the world came to be construed

---

[46] Bernard Sylvester, *The Cosmographia of Bernardus Silvestris: A Translation with Introduction and Notes*, by Winthrop Wetherbee (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 79. For this ordering, see the illuminating remarks of Peter Dronke, "Bernard Silvestris, Natura, and Personifications", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980): 26–27.

[47] Brian Stock, *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Bernard Sylvester* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 234–37; Wetherbee, "Introduction", in *The Cosmographia of Bernardus Silvestris*, 13–19.

[48] Stock, *Myth and Science*, 66, 234–37. On the many interpretations of "reform" in twelfth-century thought, see Constable, *Reformation of the Twelfth Century*.

[49] Alan of Lille, *Plaint of Nature*, 96.

[50] Ibid., 98–99.

in increasingly optimistic terms, for it held the promise of man's perfectibility.[51] Hugh White characterizes this intellectual shift as follows:

> the monastic model of the spiritual life in which the world is shut out and a spiritual oasis cultivated behind the walls of the monastery is challenged by the idea that an engagement with the world should be made so that the world in all its parts can be made perfect.[52]

This empathic vision of nature informed the way that medieval authors regarded various beasts. Joyce E. Salisbury even suggests that beginning in the twelfth century "the metaphors people used to understand themselves and their actions caused them to link themselves with animals in their imaginations".[53] This imaginary informed institutional, as well as individual, identities.

Others have argued that animals have long featured as a mainstay of political discourse in the West. Giorgio Agamben has recently and influentially identified the politicization of "raw life" from the moment that Aristotle defined man as a political animal.[54] Ever since this time, the political order has been imagined in opposition to the category of nature. For Agamben, the human and the animal remain fundamentally irreconcilable categories, as evident, for example, in his analysis of a thirteenth-century miniature from a Hebrew manuscript in the Ambrosian library in Milan that represents Ezechial's vision of the end of time.[55] The painting features the just as human bodies with animal heads. Agamben concludes that the two contrary aspects of the painted figures point to a utopian, though unachievable, vision in which the natural and the social can be unified in a single, harmonious body.

[51] Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century*; Tullio Gregory, "L'idea di natura nella filosofia medievale prima dell'ingresso della fisica di Aristotele: Il secolo XII", in *La filosofia della natura nel medioevo: Atti del Terzo Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia Medievale* (Milan: Società editrice Vita e pensiero, 1966), 27–65; Winthrop Wetherbee, "Philosophy, Cosmology, and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance", in A *History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). With respect to similar attitudes in art, see the foundational arguments of Mâle, *Twelfth Century*, 316–63.

[52] Hugh White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness in a Medieval Literary Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 79.

[53] Joyce E. Salisbury, "Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages," in *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, ed. Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior (New York: Routledge, 1997), 18. See also eadem, *The Beast Within* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

[54] See also the discussion of Derrida's characterization of animals in Chapter 1.

[55] Giorgio Agamben, *L'ouvert: De l'homme et de l'animal*, trans. Joël Gayraud (Paris: Bibliothèque Rivages, 2011), 12. For this miniature (Milan, Ambrosian, MS B. 32, fol. 136r), see Zofia Ameisenowa, "Animal-headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints and Righteous Men", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 12 (1949): 28–34; Marc Michael Epstein, *Dreams of Subversion in Medieval Jewish Art and Literature* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 82, 144, n. 73.

Although admirable in its scope, the vast diachronic trajectory of Agamben's argument tends to reduce art objects to illustrations of his political thesis. Indeed, the bird-headed men that Agamben analyzes are not as unique as he intimates, for similar creatures appear in other Hebrew manuscripts, including a thirteenth-century Haggadah, probably produced in Mainz.[56] In his analysis of this work, Marc Michael Epstein suggests that this hybrid mode of figuration stems in part from halakhic proscriptions of graven images, but this, for him, is likely only part of the story.[57] He argues that bird heads effectively offer "blank faces" that could serve to subvert hegemonic Christian power, responding to conversionary sermons and mob rhetoric. Epstein further suggests that these same images could respond to internal xenophobic pressures, offering a vehicle for Jewish artists to think through their complex position within late medieval society in Europe. The manifold, even contradictory, meanings that human/animal hybrids could embody made them attractive figures to patrons, who occupied a conflicted position within medieval society.

The social position of the Augustinian canons at Rio Mau was obviously not as precarious as that of thirteenth-century Jews in Germany. Nevertheless, Augustinian houses were clearly not central to Portuguese royal patronage patterns around the year 1200, which tended to favor new religious orders. For those institutions occupying the margins of such a patronage system, the project of defining or positioning oneself could have taken on some urgency and may have required exceptional and novel modes of articulating identities. It is testimony to monsters' remarkably labile and creative potential that a siren features in imagining the universalizing and ecclesiastical vision of Rio Mau.

The bird and siren of Rio Mau, however, cannot be reduced to mere political allegories, especially as they participate in a broader practice of representing monsters and beasts within the church, from the grimacing lions of the capital choirs to the griffins above the north portal. In considering this repeated appeal to the monstrous and the bestial, so characteristic of Portuguese churches, Rosi Braidotti's recent engagement with Giorgio Agamben is instructive, for it expands the argument that human life can be divided into two spheres: *bios*, the social or political, and *zoe*, an intensity that is, among others the realm of the creative.[58] Although these two spheres can intersect, *zoe* cannot ultimately be contained by *bios*. Similarly, over a generation ago, Meyer Schapiro identified a "force" in Romanesque carvings of animals that he believed was largely purged by the

---

[56] Jerusalem, Israel Museum, MS. 180/57.
[57] Marc Michael Epstein, *The Medieval Haggadah: Art, Narrative and Religious Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 50.
[58] Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 38–40. See also the discussion of Jussi Parikka, *Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xxiii–xiv.

thirteenth century.[59] The late Middle Ages, he argued, no longer regarded beasts as menacing, but as small and harmless, regarded with feelings of sympathy. St Francis's sermon to the birds manifests, for Schapiro, this new sympathetic attitude, as do the dragonflies and butterflies that decorate the margins of contemporary manuscripts.

A similar trajectory might be identified at Rio Mau. The robust carvings of grimacing lions, which invade the viewer's space in the mid-twelfth-century choir, embody an energy that resists a fully logocentric interpretation. This treatment yields some fifty years to the more ordered, even diagrammatic, vision of the west tympanum, in which the monstrous and human seem largely aligned. However, the restive forms of the griffins in the north tympanum do not so obviously conform to this diachronic account. If the bird and siren of the west tympanum have been largely appropriated toward advancing a political agenda, the energetic griffins suggest that a process of domestication has not been fully achieved. These confronted monsters, which snarl and claw at one another, convey an energy that might even extend to an interpretation of the creatures of the west tympanum. Compared with the rather wooden postures of the clerics, the siren cuts an energetic pose, splaying her tails and raising her arms, and the bird rocks back on its legs, and is represented in profile. While these two creatures may work in advancing institutional visions, various aspects of their figures exceed the logic of the representational norms established for the human figures at center.

Considered as a group, the various monsters and animals carved at Rio Mau embody an energy that in many ways surpasses the logic of a message, ecclesiastical, theological, or otherwise. Although these monsters might have been placed in the service of an ideological program, they are not fully contained by such an agenda. An argument could be made that a similar energy infuses the figures of monsters considered throughout this volume. Indeed, it may be that this very boundless aspect of monsters' energy ultimately accounts for their appeal for medieval audiences and patrons in Portugal, as well as across Europe. Such tolerance, even desire, for the boundless within the art of the Church, arguably the most important Romanesque institution, is nothing short of remarkable when viewed from the perspective of the twenty-first century. The multifarious figure of the medieval monster stands in stark contrast to the institutional strategies of "branding" and of the carefully constructed "image" that characterize our age.

59   Schapiro, *Romanesque Architectural Sculpture*, 185–209.

AFTERWORD

Throughout this volume, I have examined the particularities of individual representations of monsters in the belief that these addressed needs specific to their original contexts. When examined in sustained fashion, these carvings can be shown to embody ideals, offer sophisticated transformations of, or commentaries on, traditions, and function as decorous embellishments of churches. Stepping away from this series of focused case studies for a moment, one might reasonably ask if broader trends might be identified. What do the monsters found in so many twelfth-century churches tell us about the period? Why, in short, were so many carvings of monsters deemed necessary?

These are difficult questions to answer, in part because the twelfth century witnessed a host of transformations in economic, intellectual, political, religious, and other spheres. These myriad developments have proven difficult to characterize in the arts from across Europe, which have increasingly been characterized more for their eclecticism than for their unified purpose. Charles Homer Haskins's 1927 epithet, "The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century", remains the best description of the flurry of cultural creativity during this period.[1] Haskins recognized the complex origins of the outburst of cultural achievements in legal theory, poetry, philosophy, and many other fields. For example, he attributed the emergence of vernacular lyrics such as the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Poema de mio Cid* with the rise of pilgrimage, increases in trade, urbanization, and other factors. 'Renaissance' likewise signaled for Haskins a revival of Classical traditions, such as Bernard Sylvester's commentaries on Virgil's *Aeneid* or John of Salisbury's "Ciceronian attitude". Indeed, the Harvard professor devoted substantial attention to the transmission of Greek traditions via Arab authors, including Gerard of Cremona's Latin translation of Galen and of Islamic medical treatises from the Arabic. Yet, Haskins repeatedly stressed that the twelfth-century Renaissance was more than a classical

---

[1] Haskins, *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*.

revival. The development of history writing, he argued for one, owed little to the examples of Livy, Tacitus, or Suetonius. Rather, these are testimony to the particular genius of twelfth-century authors.

Subsequent scholarship has offered a more nuanced view of these cultural developments, which intersected with various aspects of the visual arts. Increasingly sophisticated theological and philosophical systems developed over the course of the twelfth century. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, we might identify in carvings of monsters, products of the imagination, an attempt to grapple with epistemological problems that would engage the best minds of Europe for decades to come. In the religious sphere, there were countless efforts toward reform of the institution of the Church. The precise definition of "reform" meant very different things to different people, but the ubiquity of this call suggests a pressing need for redefining or sharpening an ecclesiastical mission. Such a concern complements the fact that Romanesque carvings of monsters typically featured within religious spaces. Indeed, the very encounter of Anthony and the faun at St-Paul-de-Varax, analyzed in Chapter 1, aims to imagine an authentic or genuine faith. This gesture would have resonated with many twelfth-century clerics, who sought to emulate the example of the Desert Fathers and the apostles. In short, monsters offered a vehicle to circumscribe a natural or divine order, perhaps most saliently articulated in the tympanum of Rio Mau, discussed in the final chapter.

Many other connections could be made. But rather than attempt to align monsters to what we believe we know about broader cultural and social trends in the twelfth century, in this study I have been more interested in the ways in which individual representations of monsters can challenge or complicate our own assumptions about what we believe we already know about medieval art. What I have repeatedly suggested is that monsters pose important questions for the practice of medieval art history. The monsters on the Moutiers and Vézelay capitals challenge iconographic readings; the Varrax faun inverts catholic hierarchies of being, in which man stands above the non-human; and the Mozac centaur potentially expands our understanding of what aspects of classical art were deemed beautiful, and which did not necessarily have any specific symbolic meaning attached. In similar fashion, many of the monsters examined in this volume do not serve as mere ciphers, pointing to some outside message. Rather, their very material presence energizes the work of art in paradoxical, even contradictory ways. Accordingly, Romanesque monsters resist containment within modern interpretive categories and offer testimony to the density and nuance of the medieval imagination.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Alan of Lille. *De planctu naturae*, ed. Nikolaus M. Häring. *Studie Medievali*, 3rd ser., 19, no. 2 (1978): 797–879.

——. *Plaint of Nature*, trans. James J. Sheridan. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1980.

Amalarius of Metz. *De ecclesiastici officiis*. PL 105, cols 985–1242.

Ambrose of Milan. *De Cain et Abel*. PL 14.

Augustine of Hippo. *De Civitate Dei*, ed. and trans. R.W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Beowulf, ed. Daniel Donoghue, trans. Seamus Heaney. New York: Norton, 2002.

Bernard of Clairvaux. *Apologia*, ed. and trans. Conrad Rudolph, in *The 'Things of Greater Importance': Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.

——. *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri M. Rochais, 8 vols. Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957–1977.

Bernard of Cluny. *De contemptu mundi*, ed. and trans. Ronald E. Pepin, in *Scorn for the World: Bernard of Cluny's De Contemptu Mundi: The Latin Text with English Translation and an Introduction*. East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991.

——. *De octo vitiis*, in *Bernardi Cluniacensis carmina de trinitate et de fide catholica, De castitate servanda, In libros regum, De octo vitiis*, ed. Katarina Halvarson. Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1963, 97–138. English translation by Ronald E. Pepin. "De octo vitiis: A Satire by Bernard of Cluny", *Allegorica* 18 (1997): 31–99.

Bernard Sylvester, *De mundi universitate libri duo*, ed. Carl Sigmund Barach and Johann Wrobel. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964. *The Cosmographia of Bernardus Silvestris: A Translation with Introduction and Notes*, by Winthrop Wetherbee. New York: Columbia University Press, 1973.

Consuetudines Cluniacensium antiquiores cum redactionibus derivatis, ed. Kassius Hallinger. CCM 7.2. Siegburg: F. Schmitt, 1983.

Dialogus Salomonis et Marcolfi, ed. and trans. Jan M. Ziolkowski. Cambridge, MA: Department of the Classics, Harvard University, 2008.

Documentos Medievais Portugueses. Documentos Regios, ed. R. de Azevedo. Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1958.

Gregory the Great. *Registre des lettres*, ed. Pierre Minard et al. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991.

Hugh of Fouilloy. *Aviarium. The Medieval Book of Birds*, ed. and trans. Willene B. Clark. Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992.

Hugh of St Victor. *De institutione novitiorum*. PL 176, 925–52.

——. *In Ecclesiasten homiliae*. PL 175.

Iotsaldus of Saint-Claude. *Vita des Abtes Odilo von Cluny*. ed. J. Staub. MGH Scriptores 66. Hanover: Hahn, 1998.

Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiae*, trans. Stephen A. Barney, in *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

——. *Sententia*e. PL 83.

Isidorus versificatus, in Christian Hünemörder, "Isidorus versificatus: ein anonyms Lehrgedicht über Monstra und Tiere aus dem 12. Jahrhundert", *Vivarium* 13. no. 2 (1975): 103–18.

Jacobus de Voragine. *Legenda aurea vulgo historia lombarda dicta*, ed. Johann Georg Theodor Graesse, 2nd edn. Osnabrük: O. Zeller, 1950.

——. *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Jerome. *Vita Pauli*, ed. Vincent Hunink. Leuven: Uitgeverij P., 2002. (This edition is available online: http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/jeromevita-pauli.html.)

John Cassian. *Conférences*, ed. and trans. Eugène Pichery, Sources Chrétiennes 54, 3 vols. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1958.

——. *De institutis coenobiorum*, ed. Michael Petschenig and Gottfried Kreuz. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaft, 2004.

Jonas of Bobbio. *Vita Iohannis*, ed. Bruno Krusch, in *Ionae vitae Columbani, Vedestas, Iohannis*. MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum 3. Hannover: Hahn, 1896.

Julian of Vézelay. *Sermons*, ed. Damien Vorreux, 2 vols. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1972.

Liber monstrorum, ed. Franco Porsia. Bari: Dedalo libri, 1976.

Lucretius. *De rerum natura*, ed. and trans. W.H.D. Rouse, revised Martin Ferguson Smith. LCL 181. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Monumenta vizeliacensia: Textes relatifs à l'histoire de l'abbaye de Vézelay, ed. R.B.C. Huygens. CCCM 42. Turnhout: Brepols, 1976.

Partial English translation by John Scott and John O. Ward. *The*

Vézelay Chronicle. Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992.

Nigel of Canterbury. *The Passion of St. Lawrence, Epigrams and Marginal Poems*, ed. and trans. J. Ziolkowski. New York: Garland, 1994.

——. *Vita sancti Pauli primi eremitae*, ed. L.M. Kaiser, in "A Critical Edition of Nigel Wireker's *Vita Sancti Pauli Primi Eremitae*", *Classical Folia* 14 (1960): 63–81.

"*Nunc homo, cras humus*: A Twelfth-Century Cluniac Poem on the Certainty of Death. (Troyes, Médiathèque de l'Agglomération troyenne 918, fols. 78v–79v)", ed. and trans. Scott Bruce, *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006): 95–110.

Ovid. *Fasti*, ed. and trans. James George Frazer. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931.

——. *Metamorphoses*, ed. and trans. Frank Justus Miller, revised G.P. Goold. LCL 42–42. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977–1984.

Peter the Venerable. *Adversus Iudaeos*, ed. Yvonne Friedman. Turnhout: Brepols, 1985.

Pictor in Carmine: Ein Handbuch der Typologie aus der Zeit um 1200 nach MS 300 des Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, ed. Karl-August Wirth. Berlin: Mann, 2006.

Pliny the Elder. *Natural History, Books 3–7*, ed. and trans. H. Rackham. LCL 352. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942.

Rabanus Maurus. *De Universo*. PL 111, cols 1–614.

Ratramanus. *Epistola de Cynocephalis*. PL 121, cols 1153–56.

Servius the Grammarian. *In Vergilii carmina comentarii*, ed. Georgius Thilo and Hermannus Hagen. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1881.

Ruodlieb, ed. and trans. Dennis M. Kratz, in *Waltharius, and Ruodlieb*. New York: Garland, 1984.

Statius. *Achillead*, ed. and trans. J.H. Mozley, in *Statius II*. LCL 207. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928.

——. *Silvae*, ed. and trans. D.R. Shackleton Bailey. LCL 206. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

——. *Silvae: Book 2*, ed. Carole E. Newlands. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

——. *The* Silvae *of Statius*, trans. Betty Rose Nagle. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004.

——. *The Thebaid: Seven Against Thebes*, trans. Charles Stanley Ross. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

——. *Thebeid, Books 8–12; Achilleid*, ed. and trans. D.R. Shackleton. LCL 498. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Suger of Saint Denis. *De rebus in administratione gestis*, ed. and trans. Erwin Panofsky, in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Chruch of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, 2nd edn. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.

The Book of Beasts: Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth-Century, trans. T.H. White. New York: Dover, 1984.

The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks, trans. Benedicta Ward. New York: Penguin, 2003.

The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: A Critical Edition, ed. Paula Gerson, Annie Shaver-Crandell, Alison Stones and Jeanne Krochalis, 2 vols. London: Harvey Miller, 1998.

Theophilus. *Diversarium atrium schedula*, ed. and trans. John G. Hawthorn and Cyril Stanly Smith. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1963.

Thomas of Radilo. *Vita Petri abbatis*. PL 209.

Tristan de Nanteuil, ed. K.V. Sinclair. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1971.

Varro. *On the Latin Language*, ed. and trans. Roland G. Kent. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938.

Virgil. *Aeneidos: liber primus*, ed. with a commentary by R.G. Austin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

——. *The Aeneid*, trans. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Vintage Books, 1983.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Abel, Mickey. "Recontextualizing the Context: The Dispute Capital from Saint-Hilaire of Poitiers and Storytelling in the Poitou around the Time of the Peace of God Movement", *Gesta* 47 (2008): 51–66.

Abou-el-Haj, Barbara. *The Medieval Cult of Saints: Formations and Transformations*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Adams, James Luther. *The Grotesque in Art and Literature: Theological Reflections.* Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997.

Adhémar, Jean. *Influences antiques dans l'art du Moyen Âge français*. London: The Warburg Institute, 1939.

Agamben, Giorgio. *L'ouvert: De l'homme et de l'animal*, trans. Joël Gayraud. Paris: Bibliothèque Rivages, 2011.

——. *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

Ahl, Frederick. *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Allworthy Armstrong, Edward. *Saint Francis: Nature Mystic; The Derivation and Significance of Nature Stories in the Franciscan Legend*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973.

Álvarez, Serafín Moralejo. "La Rencontre de Salomon et de la Reine de Saba: De la Bible de Roda aux portails gothiques", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 12 (1981): 79–109.

——. "La sculpture romane de la cathédrale de Jaca: État des questions", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 10 (1979): 79–106.

——. *Patrimonio artístico de Galicia y otros estudios: Homenaje al Prof. Dr. Serafín Moralejo Álvarez*, ed. Ángela Franco Mata, 3 vols. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 2004.

——. "Sobre la formación del estilo escultórico de Frómista y Jaca", *Actas del 23 Congreso Internaciónal de Historia del Arte*. Granada, 1973, I: 427–34.

Ambrose, Kirk. "Imagining Savage Piety at St.-Paul-de-Varax", *Studies in Iconography* 29 (2008): 1–22.

——. "Male Nudes and Embodied Spirituality", in *The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*, ed. Sherry C.M. Lindquist. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012, 65–83.

——. "Samson, David, or Hercules? Ambiguous Identities in some Romanesque Lion-Fighter Sculptures", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 62, no. 3 (2005): 131–46.

——. "The Fall of Simon Magus on a Capital at Vézelay", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* ser. 6, 137 (2001): 151.

——. "The 'Mystic Mill' Capital at Vézelay", in *Wind and Water: Medieval Fluid Technologies,* ed. Steven A. Walton. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006, pp. 235–58.

——. *The Nave Sculpture of Vézelay: The Art of Monastic Viewing*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2006.

——. "Viollet-le-Duc's Judith at Vézelay: Romanesque Sculpture Restoration as (Nationalist) Art", *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 10, no. 1 (2011), http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org.

——. "Visual Poetics of the Cluny Hemicycle Capital Inscriptions", *Word & Image* 20 (2004): 155–64.

Ameisenowa, Zofia. "Animal-headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints and Righteous Men", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 12 (1949): 21–45.

Angheben, Marcello. *Les chapiteaux romans de Bourgogne: Thèmes et programmes*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

——. et al. *Le patrimoine de la basilique de Vézelay*. Paris: Flohic, 1999.

Ameijeiras, Rocío Sánchez. "Ritos, signos y visions: El Tímpano Románico en Galicia (1157–1230)", in *El Tímpano Románico: Imágines, Estructuras y Audiencias*, ed. Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras and José Luis Senra. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 2003, 47–71.

Aruz, Joan, Kim Benzel and Jean M. Evans, eds. *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008.

Asma, Stephen. *On Monsters: An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Astell, Ann W. *Job, Boethius, and Epic Truth*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.

Auber, Charles-Auguste. *Histoire et théorie du symbolisme religieux avant et depuis le christianisme*, 4 vols. Paris: A. Frank, 1870–71.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984.

Bal, Meike and Norman Bryson. "Semiotics and Art History", *Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 174–208.

Bale, Anthony, ed. *St Edmund, King and Martyr: Changing Images of a Medieval Saint*. York: York Medieval Press, 2009.

Baltrusaitis, Jurgis. *La stylistique ornamentale dans la sculpture romane*. Paris: A. Colin, 1931.

——. *Le Moyen Age fantastique: antiquités et exotismes dans l'art gothique*. Paris: A. Colin, 1955.

——. *Reveils et prodiges: le gothique fantastiques*. Paris: A. Colin, 1960.

Bardzell, Jeffrey. *Speculative Grammar and Stoic Language Theory in Medieval Allegorical Narrative*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Barkan, Leonard. *Transuming Passion: Ganymede and the Erotics of Humanism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Barral I Altet, Xavier. *Contre l'art roman? Essai sur un passé réinventé*. Paris: Fayard, 2006.

Barrère, Joseph. *Histoire réligieuse et monumentale de diocèse d'Agen depuis les temps les plus reculéa jusqu'à nos jours*, 2 vols. Agen: A Chairou, 1855–56.

Barthes, Roland. "Rhétorique de l'image", *Communications* 4 (1964): 40–51.

Bartlett, Robert. *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350*. London: Penguin, 1994.

Bâschet, Jérôme. "Iconography beyond Iconography: Relational Meanings and Figures of Authority in the Reliefs of Souillac", in *Current Directions in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Sculpture Studies*, ed. Robert Maxwell and Kirk Ambrose. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010, 23–45.

——. *Le sein du père: Abraham et la paternité dans l'Occident medieval*. Paris: Gallimard, 2000.

Bassy, Alain-Marie. "Du text à l'illustration: pour une sémiologie des étapes", *Semiotica* 11, no. 4 (1974): 297–334.

Bataille, Georges. *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy*. Volume 1, *Consumption*, trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Zone Books, 1988.

Bathe, Uwe. *Der romanische Hapitelsaal in Brauweiler*. Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2003.

Baumans, Alex. "Original Sin, the History of Salvation and the Monastic Ideal of St. Odo of Cluny in His *Occupatio*", in *Serta Devota in memoriam Guillelmi Lourdaux*, ed. Werner Verbeke et al., vol. 2. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995, 335–57.

Baxter, Ron. *Bestiaries and their Users in the Middle Ages*. Stroud: Sutton, 1998.

Beal, Timothy K. *Religion and Its Monsters*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Belting, Hans. *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Benson, Robert Louis, and Giles Constable, eds. *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Berliner, Rudolf. "The Freedom of Medieval Art", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* ser. 6, 28 (1945): 263–88.

Berlow, Rosalind K. "Social and Economic Aspects of the Early History of Vézelay (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)" (PhD dissertation, City University of New York, 1971).

——. "Spiritual Immunity at Vézelay (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)", *Catholic Historical Review* 62 (1976): 573–88.

Bernards, Matthäus. "*Nudus nudum Christum sequi*", *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 14 (1951): 148–51.

——. *Speculum Virginum: Geistigkeit und Seelenleben der Frau im Hochmittelalter*. Cologne: Böhlau, 1955.

Bernheimer, Richard. *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952.

Beyssac, Jean. *Les chanoines de l'église de Lyon*. Lyon: P. Grange, 1914.

Bhabba, Homi. "Beyond the Pale: Art in the Age of Multicultural Translation", in *Cultural Diversity in the Arts: Art, Art Policies, and the Facelift of Europe*, ed. Ria Lavrijsen. Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute, 1993.

Biakolo, Emevwo. "On the Theoretical Foundations of Orality and Literacy", *Research in African Literatures* 30, no. 2 (1999): 42–65.

Biddick, Kathleen. *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.

Bildhauer, Bettina and Robert Mills, eds. *The Monstrous Middle Ages*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

Binski, Paul. "The Angel Choir at Lincoln and the Poetics of the Gothic Smile", *Art History* 20 (1997): 350–74.

Bishko, Charles Julian. "Count Henry of Portugal, Cluny and the Antecedents of the Pacto Sucessório", *Revista Portuguesa de Historia* 13 (1981): 180–81.

——. *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History, 600–1300*. Farnham: Ashgate, 1984.

——. "The Cluniac Priories of Galicia and Portugal: Their Acquisition and Administration, 1075–ca. 1230", *Studia Monastica* 7 (1965): 314.

Bizzarro, Tina. *Romanesque Architectural Criticism: A Pre-History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Blanc, Annie and Claude Lorenz, "Observations sur la nature des materiaux de la cathédrale de Notre-Dame de Paris", *Gesta* 29 (1990): 132–38.

Bloom, Harold, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Blum, O.J. "Miter", in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1967, 9: 981–82.

Bonne, Jean-Claude, "Les ornements de l'histoire (à propos de l'ivoire

carolingien de saint Remi)", *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 51, no. 1 (1996): 37–70.

Bouchard, Constance. *Every Valley Shall Be Exalted: The Discourse of Opposites in Twelfth-Century Thought.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003.

Bouché, Anne-Marie. "*Vox Imaginis*: Anomaly and Enigma in Romanesque Art", in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006, 317–30.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990.

Bousquet, Jacques. "Copie et expansion de motifs dans la sculpture romane, la sirène aux centaures (à Saint-Gaudens et ailleurs)", *Revue de Comminges* 93 (1980): 563–79.

Bouyer, Louis. *La vie de Saint Antoine.* Abbaye Saint Wandrille: Editions de Fontenelle, 1950.

Bovey, Alixe, *Monsters and Grotesques in Medieval Manuscripts.* Buffalo and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Brah A. and Annie E. Coombes, eds. *Hybridity and Its Discontents: Politics, Science, Culture.* New York: Routledge, 2000.

Braidotti, Rosi. *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics.* Cambridge: Polity, 2006.

Brakke, David. "Ethiopian Demons: Male Sexuality, the Black Skinned Other, and the Monastic Self", *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10 (2001): 501–35.

Braude, Pearl. "'Cokkel in oure Clene Corn': Some Implications of Cain's Sacrifice", *Gesta* 7 (1968): 15–28.

Braun, Joseph. *Die Reliquare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung.* Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1940.

Braun, Werner Friedrich. *Studien zum Ruodlieb: Ritterideal, Erzählstruktur, und Darstellungsstil.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 1962.

Bredekamp, Horst. "Die nordspanische Hofskulptur und die Freiheit der Bildhauer", in *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Skulptur im 12./13. Jahrhundert*, ed. Herbert Beck and Kerstin Hengevoss-Dürkop, 2 vols. Frankfurt: Heinrich, 1994, 263–74.

Bréhier, Louis. "Les traits originaux de l'iconographie dans la sculpture romane de l'Auvergne", in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Arthur Kingsley Porter*, ed. Wilhelm Koehler. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939, 2: 389–93.

Brincard, Marie-Thérèse. "Les Chapiteaux histoirés de l'église de Cunault", *Bulletin Monumental* 89 (1930): 113–47.

Brown, Peter. *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Brown, S.A. and M. Herren, "The *Adelae comitissae* of Baudry of Bourgueil and the Bayeux Tapestry", *Anglo-Norman Studies* 16 (1993): 57–58.

Bruce, Scott, "Hagiography as Monstrous Ethnography: A Note on Ratramnus of Corbie's Letter Concerning the Conversion of the Cynocephali", in *Insignis sophiae arcator: Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Michael Herren on his 65th Birthday*, ed. Gernot R. Wieland, Carin Ruff and Ross G. Arthur. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006, 45–56.

Brusati, Celeste, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Brush, Kathryn, "The Capitals from Moutiers-Saint-Jean (Harvard University Art Museums) and the Carving of Medieval Art Study in America after World War I", in *Medieval Art and Architecture after the Middle Ages*, ed. Janet Marquardt and Alyce Jordan. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009, 298–311.

——. *Vastly More than Brick and Mortar: Reinventing the Fogg Art Museum in the 1920s*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Bruyne, Edgar de. *Études d'esthétique médiévale*. Bruges: De Temple, 1946.

Bryson, Norman. *Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Bulst, Niethard. *Untersuchungen zu den klosterreformen Wilhlems von Dijon (962–1031)*. Bonn: Ludwig Röhrschied, 1973.

Burns, Virginia. *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe*. New York: Zone Books, 2011.

——. *Docere verbo et exemplo: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979.

——. *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*. New York: Zone Books, 1991.

——. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987.

——. *Metamorphosis and Identity*. New York: Zone Books, 2001.

——. "Wonder", *American Historical Review* 102 (1997): 1–26.

Cahier, Charles, and Arthur Martin. *Nouveaux mélanges d'archéologie, d'histoire et de literature sur le moyen age*. Vol. 1. Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Fils, 1874.

Cahn, Walter. "Le tympan de Neuilly-en-Donjon", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 8 (1965): 351–64.

——. *Romanesque Bible Illumination*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982.

——. *Romanesque Manuscripts: The Twelfth Century*, 2 vols. London: Harvey Miller, 1996.

Camille, Michael. *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

——. *Master of Death: The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996.

——. *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

——. "Mouths and Meanings: Towards an Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art", in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy. Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1993, 43–57.

——. "'Seeing and Lecturing': Disputation in a Twelfth-Century Tympanum from Reims", in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object*, ed. Elizabeth Sears and Thelma K. Thomas. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002, 75–87.

——. *The Gargoyles of Notre Dame: Medievalism and the Monsters of Modernity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

——. *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Cardani, Rossana. "La sirena nel San Vittore di Muralto: una nota sugli animali marini nella scultura romanica", *Unsere Kunstdenkmäler* 40 (1989): 393–401.

Carruthers, Mary. *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

——. *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

—— and Jan Ziolkowski, eds. *Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.

Caumont, Arcisee de. *Abécédaire ou rudiment d'archéologie*. Paris: Derache, 1850.

Caviness, Madeline H. *Visualizing Women in the Middle Ages: Sight, Spectacle, and Scopic Economy*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

Changeux, J.P. "Art and Neuroscience", *Leonardo* 27 (1994): 189–201.

Chazelle, Celia M. "Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles", *Word & Image* 6 (1990): 138–53.

Chenu, Marie-Dominique. *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century*: *Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Chérest, A. "Vézelay: Étude Historique", *Bulletin de la Société des sciences historique et naturelles de l'Yonne* 16 (1862): 209–525; 22 (1868): 5–631.

Clanchy, M.T. "Reading the Signs at Durham Cathedral", in *Literacy and Society*, ed. Karen Schousboe and Mogens Trolle Larsen. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1989, 171–82.

Clark, Kenneth. *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*. New York: Doubleday, 1959.

Clogan, Paul, ed. *The Medieval Achilleid of Statius*. Leiden: Brill, 1968.

Cocke, Richard. "Masaccio and the Spinario, Piero and the Pathos: Observations on the Reception of the Antique in Renaissance Painting", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1980): 22–23.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome, ed., *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

——. *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Coleiro, E. "St. Jerome's Lives of the Hermits", *Vigilae Christianae* 11 (1957): 167, 172.

Constable, Giles. "Monachisme et pèlerinage au Moyen Âge", *Revue historique* 258 (1977): 3–27.

——. "*Nudus nudum Christum sequi* and Parallel Formulas in the Twelfth Century", in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Huntston Williams on the Occasion of His 65ᵗʰ Birthday*, ed. F. Forrester Church and Timothy George. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979, 83–91.

——. "Opposition to Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages", *Studia Gratiana* 19 (1976): 123–46.

——. *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, 2 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967.

——. *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Cothren, Michael. "Who is the Bishop in the Virgin Chapel of Beauvais Cathedral?", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, 125 (1995): 1–16.

Crosnier, A.-J. "Iconographie de l'église de Vézelay", *Congrès archéologique de France* 14 (1848): 219–30.

Crow, Thomas. *The Intelligence of Art.* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Crozet, René. "Notes sur un chapiteau de Moutierneuf", *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 3rd ser., no. 12 (1939–41): 133–35.

Curto, Diogo Ramada. "Portuguese Navigations: The Pitfalls of National Histories", in *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the 16ᵗʰ and 17th Centuries*, ed. Jay A. Leveson. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2007.

Cuttler, C.D. "The Temptations of Saint Anthony in Art from Earliest Times to the First Quarter of the XVI Century" (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1952).

Dahl, Ellert. "*Dilexi decorum domus Dei*: Building to the Glory of God in the Middle Ages", *Acta ad archaeologiam et atrium historiam pertinentia*, alt. ser. 1 (1981): 157–90.

Dale, Thomas E.A. "Convention, Vision, and Real Presence in Romanesque Portrait Sculpture", *Gesta* 46 (2007): 101–20.

——."Monsters, Corporeal Deformities and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa: A Response to St. Bernard", *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 402–36.

——. "The Individual, the Resurrected Body and Romanesque Portraiture: The Tomb of Rudolf von Schwaben in Merseberg", *Speculum* 77 (2002): 707–43.

——. "The Monstrous", in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, 253–73.

——. "The Nude at Moissac: Vision, Phantasia, and the Experience of Romanesque Sculpture", in *Current Directions in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Sculpture Studies*, ed. Robert Maxwell and Kirk Ambrose. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010, 61–76.

Darling, M. "The Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture of Perrecy-les-Forges" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1994).

Darling, Masuyo Tokita. "A Sculptural Fragment of Cluny III and the Three-Headed Bird Iconography", in *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen. Groningen: Egbert Forste, 1997, 209–23.

Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750*. New York: Zone Books, 1998.

Davidson, Cathy, ed. *Reading in America: Literature and Social History*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Debiais, Vincent. "The Poem of Baudri for the Countess Adèle: A Starting Point for Broad Reading of Medieval Ekphrasis", forthcoming.

Debidor, Victor-Henry. *Le bestiaire sculpté du moyen âge en France*. Paris: Arthaud, 1961.

D'Emilio, James. "The Romanesque Churches of Galicia: The Making of a Provincial Art", in *IV Congreso Internacional de Estudios Galegos: Universidade de Oxford, 26–28 Setembro 1994*. Oxford: Oxford Centre for Galician Studies, 1997, 547–72.

Denny, Don. "The Last Judgment Tympanum of Autun: Its Sources and Meaning", *Speculum* 57 (1983): 532–47.

Derrida, Jacques. *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.

Didi-Huberman, Georges. "La Couleur de chair ou le paradoxe de Tertullien", *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse* 35 (1987): 9–49.

——. *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. John Goodman. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005.

Didron, Adolph Napoléon, *Iconographie chrétienne*. Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1843.

Diemer, Peter. "Stil und Ikonographie der Kapitelle von Ste.-Madeleine, Vézelay" (PhD dissertation, Ruprecht-Karl-Universität, Heidelberg, 1975).

Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999.

Dinzelbacher, Peter. "Monster und Dämonen am Kirchenbau", in *Dämonen, Monster, Fabelwesen*, ed. Ulrich Müller and Werner Wunderlich. St Gallen: UVK-Fachverlag für Wissenschaft und Studium, 1999, 103–26.

Dodds, Jerrilyn Denise. *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.

Doniger, Wendy O. *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Douchet, Sébastien. "La peau de centaure à la frontière de l'humanité et de l'animalité", *Micrologus* 13 (2005): 285–312.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Praeger, 1966.

Dronke, Peter. "Bernard Silvestris, Natura, and Personifications", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980): 16–31.

Droste, Thorsten. *Die Skulpturen von Moissac: Gestalt und Funktion romanischer Bauplastik*. Munich: Hirmer, 1996.

duBois, Page. *Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1982.

Duby, Georges. *Les trois orders: ou, L'imaginaire du féodalisme*. Paris: Gallimard, 1978.

Duggan, Lawrence G. "Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate'?", *Word & Image* 5 (1989): 227–51.

Dynes, Wayne R. "Art, Language, Romanesque", *Gesta* 28 (1989): 3–10.

Eco, Umberto, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, trans. Hugh Bredin. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986.

Edwards, Philip. *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Elder, E. Rozanne and John R. Sommerfeldt, eds. *The Chimaera of His Age: Studies on Bernard of Clairvaux*. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980.

Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, trans. Edmund Jephcott. New York: Urizen Books, 1978.

Elliot, Dyan, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

Epstein, Marc Michael. *Dreams of Subversion in Medieval Jewish Art and Literature*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

——. *The Medieval Haggadah: Art, Narrative and Religious Imagination*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Evans, G.R. *The Thought of Gregory the Great*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Farago, Claire, ed. *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450–1650*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Favreu, Robert, Jean Michaud and B. Mora. *Corpus des inscriptions de la France medieval*. Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1994.

Fernandez, Eukene Martinez de Lagos. "Las luchas de centauros y sirenas

en los templos medievales navarros", *Cuadernos de arte e iconografía* 11 (1993): 160–72.

Ferreira de Almeida, Carlos Alberto. "Influências Francesas na Arte Românica Portuguesa", *Histoire du Portugal, Histoire Européene. Actes du Colloque (1986)* (Lisbon/Paris: F.C.G, 1987): 27–36.

Flood, Finbarr. *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Forsyth, Ilene. "Five Sculptures from a Single Limestone Formation: The Case of Savigny", *Gesta* 33 (1994): 47–52.

——. "L'Ane Parlant: The Ass of Balaam in Burgundian Romanesque Sculpture", *Gesta* 20 (1981): 59–65.

——. "Narrative at Moissac: Schapiro's Legacy", *Gesta* 41 (2002): 71–94.

——. "The Ganymede Capital at Vézelay", *Gesta* 15 (1976): 241–46.

——. "The Monumental Arts of the Romanesque Period: Recent Research", in *The Cloisters: Studies in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary*, ed. Elizabeth C. Parker and Mary B. Shepard. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992, 3–25.

——. "The Romanesque Portal of the Church of Saint-Andoche at Saulieu (Cote d'Or)", *Gesta* 19 (1980): 83–94.

——. "The Samson Monolith", in *The Brummer Collection of Medieval Art: The Duke University Museum of Art*, ed. Caroline Bruzelius. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991, 21–38.

——. *Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972.

——. "The Theme of Cockfighting in Burgundian Romanesque Sculpture", *Speculum* 53 (1978): 252–82.

——. "The 'Vita Apostolica' and Romanesque Sculpture: Some Preliminary Observations", *Gesta* 25 (1986): 75–82.

Fracheboud, M. André. "Je suis le chimère de mon siècle: Le Problème action-contemplation au Coeur de saint Bernard", *Collectanea ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 16 (1954): 45–52, 128–38, 183–91.

Frankl, Paul. *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960.

Freedberg, David. *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

----- and Victor Gallese. "Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience", *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11, no. 5 (2007): 197–203.

Friedman, John Bloch. *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.

——. "Thomas of Cantimpré De Naturis rerum Prologue, Book III, and Book XIX", in *La science de la nature: theories et pratiques*, Cahiers d'Études Médiévales 2. Montreal: Bellarmin, 1974.

Gage, John. "Horatian Reminisces in Two Twelfth-Century Art Critics", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973): 359–60.

Gaillard, Georges. "Aspects de l'art roman portugais", *Bracara Augusta* 16–17 (1964): 127–31.

Gearhart, Heidi. "Theophilus' *On Diverse Arts*: The Persona of the Artist and the Production of Art in the Twelfth Century" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2010).

Gilbert, Creighton. "The Pisa Baptistery Pulpit Addresses Its Public", *Artibus et historiae* 21 (2000): 9–30.

Gilmore, David. *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.

Girard, René. *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977.

Goguen, J.A., ed. "Art and the Brain", special edition of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6, nos 6–7 (1999).

Goldschmidt, Adolph. *Die Bronzetüren von Nowgorod und Gnesen*. Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen seminars der Universität Marburg, 1932.

Gombrich, Ernst H. *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation.* New York: Pantheon, 1960.

——. *A Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art*, 2nd edn. London: Phaidon, 1984.

Gómez-Moreno, Carmen. *Medieval Art from Private Collections*. New York: The Cloisters Museum, 1968.

Gould, Graham. *The Desert Fathers on Monastic Community*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Grabar, Oleg. *The Mediation of Ornament*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Graf, Gerhard, José Mattoso and Manuel Luís Real. *Portugal roman*, 2 vols. La-Pierre-qui-Vire: Zodiaque, 1986.

Gravestock, Pamela. "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?", in *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life, and Literature*, ed. Debra Hassig. New York: Garland, 1999, 119–39.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Greenlaugh, Michael. *Marble Past, Monumental Present: Building with Antiquities in the Medieval Mediterranean*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Grégoire, Réginald. "L'adage ascétique 'Nudus nudum Christum sequi'", *Studi storici in onore di Ottorino Bertolini.* Pisa: Pacini, 1972.

Gregory, Tullio. "L'idea di natura nella filosofia medievale prima dell'ingresso della fisica di Aristotele: Il secolo XII", in *La filosofia della natura nel medioevo: Atti del Terzo Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia Medievale*. Milan: Società editrice Vita e pensiero, 1966, 27–65.

Guigue, Marie-Claude. *Topographie historique du département de l'Ain*. Bourg-en-Bresse: Gromier, 1873; rpt Marseille: Lafitte, 1976.

Hahn, Cynthia. *Portrayed on the Heart: Narrative Effect in Pictorial Lives*

of Saints from the Tenth through the Thirteenth Century. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.

Hallinger, Kassius. "Consuetudo: Begriff, Formen, Forschungsberichte, Inhalt", in *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Stift*. Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1980, 140–66.

Hanning, R.W. and Clifford Davidson. "Ut Enim faber – sic creator: Divine Creation as Context for Human Creativity in the Twelfth Century", in *Word, Picture, Spectacle: Papers by Karl P. Wentersdorf*, ed. Cifford Davidson. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1984, 95–149.

Haraway, Donna J. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Harpham, Geoffrey Galt. *On the Grotesque: Strategies of Contradiction in Art and Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.

Harvey, P.B. "Saints and Satyrs: Jerome the Scholar at Work", *Athenaeum* 86 (1998): 35–56.

Haskins, Charles Homer. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927.

Hassig, Debra. *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Hatinguais, J. "Points de vue sur la volonté et le jugement dans l'oeuvre humaniste chartrain", *L'homme et son destin d'après les penseurs du moyen âge*, Actes du premier Congrès International de Philosophie Médievale. Paris, 1960, 424–25.

Hayward, Jane and Walter Cahn. *Radiance and Reflection: Medieval Art from the Raymond Pitcairn Collection*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982.

Head, Thomas and Richard Landes, eds. *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response in France around the Year 1000*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Hearn, M.F., ed. and trans. *The Architectural Theory of Viollet-le-Duc: Readings and Commentary*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

Heslop, T.E. "Contemplating Chimera in Medieval Imagination: St Anselm's Crypt at Canterbury", in *Raising the Eyebrow: John Onians and World Art Studies: An Album Amicorum in his Honour*, ed. Lauren Golden. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2001, 153–68.

Heyman, Avital. *'That Old Pride of the Men of the Auvergne': Laity and Church in Auvergnat Romanesque Sculpture*. London: Pindar, 2005.

Hilka, A. "Eine altfranzösische moralisierende Bearbeitung des Liber de Monstruosis Hominbus Orientis aus Thomas von Catimpré, De Naturis Rerum", *Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen: Philologisch-Historische Klasse* 7 (1933): 1–73.

Holdsworth, Christopher. "Bernard: Chimera of His Age?", in *Essays in Honor of Edward B. King*, ed. Robert G. Benson and Christopher Holdsworth. Sewanee, TN: University of the South, 1991, 147–63.

Holmes, Lore L., Charles T. Little and Edward V. Sayre. "Elemental Characterization of Medieval Limestone Sculpture from Parisian and Burgundian Sources", *Journal of Field Archaeology* 13 (1986): 419–38.

Horste, Kathryn. *Cloister Design and Monastic Reform in Toulouse: The Romanesque Sculpture of La Daurade*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Hudson, Nicholas. *Writing and European Thought, 1600–1830*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Huët, Marie-Helène, "Living Images: Monstrosity and Representation", *Representations* 4 (1983): 73–87.

——. *Monstrous Imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Hugo, Victor. *Notre Dame de Paris*, 2 vols. Paris: Charpentier, 1850.

Husband, Timothy. *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980.

Huys-Clavel, Viviane. *La Madeleine de Vézelay: Cohérence du décor sculpté de la nef*. Chambéry: Editions Comp'act, 1996.

Illich, Ivan. *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Jaeger, C. Stephen. *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

——. *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 900–1200*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

Jakobson, Roman. *Coup d'Oeil sur le développement de la sémiotique*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975.

Jauss, Hans Robert. *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Javelet, Robert. *Image et resemblance au douzième siècle de saint Anselme à Alain de Lille*, 2 vols. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1967.

Jeffrey, David L. "Medieval Monsters", in *Manlike Monsters on Trial: Early Records and Modern Evidence*, ed. Marjorie Halpin and Michael M. Ames. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980, 46–64.

Johnes, Christopher. "Monastic Identity and Sodomitic Danger in the Occupatio by Odo of Cluny", *Speculum* 82 (2007): 1–53.

Jones, Timothy S. and David A. Sprunger, eds. *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2002.

Jongen, Ludo. "Do Centaurs Have Souls? Centaurs as Seen by the Middle Dutch Poet Jacob van Maerlan", in *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen. Groningen: Egbert Frosten, 1997, 139–54.

Jungmann, Joseph A. *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, 2 vols, trans. Francis A. Brunner. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1992.

Kahn, Deborah. "Saint Augustin et le diable, à props d'un chapiteau de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", *Bulletin monumental* 162 (2004): 189–192.

Kappler, Claude. *Monstres, demons, et merveilles à la fin du Moyen Age.* Paris: Payot, 1980.

Karkov, Catherine and George Hardin Brown, eds. *Anglo-Saxon Styles.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003.

Katzenellenbogen, Adolf. *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art.* London: Warburg Institute, 1939.

——. "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay: Its Encyclopedic Meaning and Its Relation to the First Crusade", *Art Bulletin* 26 (1944): 141–51.

Kayser, Wolfgang. *The Grotesque in Art and Literature.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1963.

Kearney, Richard. *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness.* New York: Routledge, 2003.

Kech, Herbert. *Hagiographie als christliche Unterhaltungsliteratur: Studien zum Phänomen des Erbaulichen anhand der Mönchsviten des hl. Hieronymus.* Göppingen: A. Kümmerle, 1977.

Keenan-Kedar, Nurith. *Marginal Sculpture in France: Towards the Deciphering of an Enigmatic Pictorial Languag*e. Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1995.

Kehrer, Hugo. *Die heiligen drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst*, 2 vols. Leipzig: Seemann, 1908.

Kendall, Calvin B. *The Allegory of the Church: Romanesque Portals and their Verse Inscriptions.* Buffalo and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Kessler, Herbert, "Christ the Magic Dragon", *Gesta* 48, no. 2 (2009): 119–34.

——. "Il ciclo di San Pietro in Valle: fonti e significato", in *Gli affreschi di San Pietro in Valle a Ferentillo: le storie dell'antico e del nuovo testamento*, ed. Giulia Tamanti. Naples: Elekta Napoli, 2003, 77–116.

——. *Neither God Nor Man: Words, Images, and the Medieval Anxiety about Art.* Freiburg: Rombach, 2007.

——. *Seeing Medieval Art.* Orchard Park, NY: Broadview, 2004.

——. *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art.* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

——. *The Illustrated Bibles from Tours.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977.

King, Georgiana Goddard. "Little Romanesque Churches in Portugal", in *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. Kingsley Porter*, ed. Wilhelm Reinhold and Walter Koehler, vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939, 273–92.

Kirk, G.S. *Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970.

Kittler, Friedrich A. *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990.

Knight, Rhonda. "Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles: Representing

Colonial Fantasies in Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica*", *Studies in Iconography* 22 (2001): 55–86.

Kolve, V.A. "Ganymede/Son of Getron: Medieval Monasticism and the Drama of Same-Sex Desire", *Speculum* 73 (1998): 1014–67.

Korte, Gandulf. *Antonius der Einsiedler in Kult, Kunst und Brauchtum Westfalens*. Werl: D. Coelde, 1952.

Krause, Hans Joachim and Ernst Schubert. *Die Bronzetür der Sophienkathedrale in Nowgorod*. Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1968.

Krautheimer, Richard. *Rome: Profile of a City, 312–1308*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Krezenbacher, Leopold. *Kynokephale Dämonen südeuropäischer Volksdichtung: Vergleichende Studien zu Mythen, Sagen, Maskenbräuchen um Kynokephaloi, Werwölfe und südlawische Pesoglavci*. Munich: R. Trofenik, 1968.

Kris, Ernst. *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art*. New York: International Universities Press, 1952.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Kuehn, Sara. *The Dragon in Medieval East Christian and Islamic Art*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Kupfer, Marcia, *The Art of Healing: Painting for the Sick and the Sinner in a Medieval Town*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

Lascault, Gilbert. *Le Monstre dans l'art occidental: Un problème aesthetique*. Paris: Klinksieck, 1973.

Lay, Stephen. *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and Cultural Reorientation on the Medieval Frontier*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Le Trésor de Saint-Denis: Musée du Louvre, Paris, 12 mars–17 juin 1991. Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1991.

Leader-Newby, Ruth E. *Silver and Society in Late Antiquity: Functions and Meanings of Silver Plate in the Fourth to Seventh Centuries*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004.

Leclercq, Jean. *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Misrahi. New York: Fordham University Press, 1961.

——. "Saint Antoine dans la tradition monastique médiévale", *Studia Anselmiana* 38 (1956): 229–47.

Leclercq-Marx, Jacqueline. "De Pavie à Zagósc: La sirène comme motif de predilection des sculpteurs 'lombards' au XIIe siècle." *Arte Lombarda*, n.s., 140, no. 1 (2004): 24–32.

——. "Du monstre androcéphale au monstre humanisé: À propos des sirens et des centaures, et de leur famille, dans le haut Moyen Âge et à l'époque romane", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 45 (2002): 55–67.

——. *La sirène dans la pensée et dans l'art de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Âge:*

Du mythe païen au symbole chrétien. Brussels: Académie royale de Belgique, 1997.

——. "Le Centaure dans l'art préroman et roman. Sources d'inspiration et modes de transmission", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 37 (2006): 33–42.

——. "Les oeuvres romanes accompagnées d'une inscription: Le cas particulier des monsters", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 40 (1997): 91–102.

Lecoq, D. "La Mappemonde du Liber Floridus ou La Vision du Monde de Lambert de Saint-Omer", *Imago Mundi* 39 (1987): 25.

Lecouteux, Claude. "Les Cynocéphales. Étude d'une tradition tératologique de lantiquitæ au XIIes", *Cahiers de civilization médiévale* 24 (1981): 117–28.

——. *Les monstres dans la littérature allemande du Moyen Âge: Contribution à l'étude du merveilleux medieval*, 3 vols. Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1982.

——. *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 3rd edn. Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1995.

Lees, Julianna. "Monsters with Snake Tails in Romanesque and Pre-Romanesque Art with Special Reference to Islamic Influence and Influence on Islamic Art", http://www.green-man-of-cercles.org/articles/snake_tails.pdf (consulted 7 February 2012).

Le Goff, Jacques. *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

——. *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Léglu, Catherine E. and Stephen J. Milner, eds. *The Erotics of Consolation: Desire and Distance in the Late Middle Ages*. New York: Palgrave, 2008.

Leupin, Alexandre. *Barbarolexis: Medieval Writing and Sexuality*, trans. Kate M. Cooper. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Levenson, Jay A., ed. *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the 16th & 17th Centuries*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2007.

Lewis, Suzanne. *The Art of Matthew Paris in the* Chronica Majora. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987.

Lindquist, Sherry, ed. *Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012.

Lipton, Sara. *Images of Intolerance: The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the Bible moralisée*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

——. "'The Sweet Lean of His Head': Writing about Looking at the Crucifix in the High Middle Ages", *Speculum* 80 (2005): 1172–208.

Little, Charles T. "Searching for the Provenances of Medieval Stone Sculpture: Possibilities and Limitations", *Gesta* 33 (1994): 129–37.

Liu, Benjamin. *Medieval Joke Poetry: The* Cantigas d'Escarnho e de Mal Dizer. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Low, Peter. "'You Who Were Once Far Off': Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal of Vézelay", *Art Bulletin* 85 (2003): 469–89.

Macary, M.-M. "Saint Julien l'Hospitalier à Chanteuges", *Centre international d'études romanes, bulletin trimestriel* (1972): 27–35.

Maguire, Henry. "Adam and the Animals: Allegory and the Literal Sense in Early Christian Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987): 363–73.

Maillet-Guy. "Les commanderies de l'Ordre de Saint-Antoine en Dauphiné", *Revue de Mabillon* 16 (1926): 1, 173, 289.

Mâle, Émile. *L'art religieux du XIIe siècle en France: Étude sur les origines de l'iconographie du moyen âge*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1924.

Mâle, Émile. *Religious Art in France, the Twelfth Century: A Study in the Origins of Medieval Iconography*, trans. Marthiel Mathews. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Manitius, Max. *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur der Mittelalters*, 3 vols. Munich: Beck, 1911–31.

Marchesin, Isabelle. "Enjeux et usages de l'*Apologia* à Guillaume de Saint-Thierry dans la tradition de l'histoire de l'art", in *L'actualité de saint Bernard. Actes du colloque du collège des Bernardins*, *Paris, 2009*. Paris: Lethielleux, 2010, 213–40.

Marilier, J. "Les origines de l'abbaye de Moutiers-Saint Jean", *Bulletin de la Société Historique ed Archéologique de Langres* 13 (1963): 375–79.

Martin, Hervé. *Mentalités médiévales: XIe–XVe siècle*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998.

Mathews, Thomas. *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Mattoso, José. *Le monachisme ibérique et Cluny: Le monastères du diocese de Porto de l'an mille à 1200*. Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1968.

——. "O românico beneditino em Portugal", *Ora et Labora* 1 (1954): 25–34ff.

——. *Portugal medieval: novas interpretações*. Lisbon: Imprensa nacional, 1985.

Maxwell, Robert. "La sculpture romane et ses programmes: questions de méthode", in *Le programme: une notion pertinente en histoire de l'art médiévale*, ed. Claudia Rabel, Jean-Marie Guillouët and M. Pastoureau. Paris: Le Léopard D'or, 2011, 135–63.

——, ed. *Representing History, 900–1300: Art, Music, History*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.

——. "Romanesque Construction and the Urban Context: Parthenay-le-Vieux in Aquitaine", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 65 (2007): 24–59.

Mayor, Adrienne. *The First Fossil Hunters: Paleontology in Greek and Roman Times*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Mayr-Harting, Henry. *Ottonian Book Illumination: An Historical Study*, 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

McClymond, Kathryn. *Beyond Sacred Violence: A Comparative Study of Sacrifice*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

Megrew, Alden F. "A Church of Berry: The Abbey of St. Martin at Plaimpied", *Gesta* 7 (1968): 29–35.

Mellinkoff, Ruth. *The Mark of Cain*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981.

——. *Outcasts: Signs of Otherness in northern European Art of the Later Middle Ages*, 2 vols. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.

Mellion, Walter S. "Artifice, Memory, and *Reformatio* in Hieronymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditations in Evagelia*", *Renaissance and Reformation* 34 (1998): 5–34.

Melzak, Robert. "Saint Marcellinus between Griffins on a Romanesque Capital at Chanteuges", *Source* 9 (1990): 6–10.

Meyer, Wilhelm. "Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes", *Abhandlungen der philosophisch-philogischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 16, no. 2 (1881): 101–67.

Meyvaert, Paul. "A New Perspective on the Ruthwell Cross: *Ecclesia* and *Vita Monastica*", in *The Ruthwell Cross: Papers from the Colloquium Sponsored by the Index of Christian Art, Princeton University, 8 December 1989*, ed. Brendan Cassidy. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.

——. "The Medieval Monastic Claustrum", *Gesta* 12 (1973): 53–59.

Michaud, Philippe Alain. *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, trans. Sophie Hawks. New York: Zone Books, 2004.

Miles, Margaret. *Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning in the Christian West*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1989.

Miller, J.-A. "Extimité", in *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure, and Society*, ed. Mark Bracher et al. New York: New York University Press, 1994, 74–87.

Miller, Patricia Cox. "Jerome's Centaur: A Hyper-Icon of the Desert", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1996): 209–33.

Miller, Sarah Alison. *Medieval Monstrosity and the Female Body*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Mills, Robert. *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture*. London: Reaktion, 2005.

Mitchell, W.J.T. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Mitre Fernández, E. "Animales, vicios y herejías (sobre la criminalización de la disidencia en el Medievo)", *Cuadernos de historia de España* 74 (1994): 255–83.

Mittman, Asa and Peter Dendle, eds. *Research Companion to Monsters and Monstrous*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011.

Mode, Heinz. *Fabulous Beasts and Demons*. New York: Phaidon, 1973.

Monteiro, Manuel. *A Escultura românica em Portugal. Os temas historiados da porta principal da Sé de Braga*. Porto: Tavares Martin, 1938.

——. "O românico português: A igreja de S. Cristóvão de Rio-Mau", *Museu* 4 (1945): 5–25.

Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250*. New York: Blackwell, 1987.

Moralejo Álvarez, Sérafin. "La Rencontre de Salomon et de la Reine de Saba: De la Bible de Roda aux portails gothiques", *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* (1981): 79–109.

Morel, Philippe. *Les grotesques*. Paris: Flammarion, 1997.

Morrison, Karl. *"I am You": The Hermeneutics of Empathy in Western Literature, Theology and Art*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Mortimer, Kristin A. with contributions by William G. Klingelhofer. *Harvard University Art Museums: A Guide to the Collections*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Art Museums; New York: Abbeville, 1985.

Moxey, Keith. "Art History's Hegelian Unconscious: Naturalism as Nationalism in the Study of Early Netherlandish Painting", in *The Subject of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 25–51.

Müller, Ulrich and Werner Wunderlich, eds. *Dämonen, Monster Fabelwesen*. St Gallen: UVK, 1999.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 6–18.

Muratova, Xénia. "'Adam donne leurs noms aux animaux': L'iconographie de la scène dans l'art du Moyen Âge: les manuscripts des bestiaries enluminés du XIIe et du XIIIe siècles", *Studi medievali* 18 (1977): 367–94.

——. "L'iconografia medievale e l'"ambiente" storico", *Storia dell'arte* 28 (1976): 171–79.

Murphy, Trevor. *Pliny the Elder's* Natural History: *The Empire in the Encyclopedia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Nayrolles, Jean. *L'invention de l'art roman: À l'époque moderne (XVIIIe–XIXe siècles)*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2005.

Nees, Lawrence. *A Tainted Mantle: Hercules and the Classical Tradition at the Carolingian Court*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

——. *The Gundohinus Gospels*. Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1987.

Neidich, W. *Blow-Up: Photography, Cinema, and the Brain*. New York: DAP, 2003.

Niehr, Klaus. "Horaz in Hildesheim: Zum Problem einer mittelalterlichen Kunsttheorie", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschighte* 52 (1989): 1–24.

Noordeloos, D.P. "De Ikonographie van het Bezoek van Antonius den Groote aan Paulus van Thebe", *Het Gildeboek* 25 (1941): 33–74.

Norberg, Dag. *An Introduction to the Study of Medieval Latin Versification*,

trans. Grant C. Roti and Jacqueline de La Chapelle Skubly. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004.

Ó Carragáin, E. "The Meeting of St. Paul and St. Anthony: Visual and Literary Uses of a Eucharistic Motif", in *Keimelia: Studies in Medieval Archaeology and History in Memory of Tom Delaney*, ed. G. Mac Niocaill and P.F. Wallace. Galway: Galway University Press, 1988, 1–72.

Ong, Walter S. *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967.

——. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. New York: Methuen, 1982.

Onians, John. *Neuroarthistory*: *From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.

Otten, Willemien and Karla Polmman, eds. *Poetry an Exegesis in Premodern Latin Christianity: The Encounter between Classical and Christian Strategies of Interpretation.* Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Oulsen, K.E. and L.A.J.R. Houwen, eds. *Monsters and the Monstrous in Medieval Northwest Europe*. Leuven: Peeters, 2001.

Pächt, Otto. *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages: An Introduction*, trans. Kay Davenport. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

——. "The Pre-Carolingian Roots of Early Romanesque Art", in *Romanesque and Gothic Art*. Acts of the 20th International Congress of the History of Art, New York, 1961, vol. 1. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963, 67–75.

——. and J.J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford*. Vol. 3: *British, Irish, and Icelandic Schools, with Addenda to Volumes 1 and 2*. Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1973.

Palazzo, Eric. "Les pratiques liturgiques et devotionnelles et le décor monumental dans les églises du Moyen Âge", in *L'emplacement et la fonction des images dans la peinture murale du Moyen Âge*: Actes du 5ème Séminaire international d'art mural, 16–18 septembre 1992, Saint-Savin. Saint-Savin: Centre international d'art mural, 1992, 45–56.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*. Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksells, 1960; rpt New York: Harper Torchbook, 1969.

Parikka, Jussi. *Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Paxson, James J. and Cynthia A. Gravlee, eds. *Desiring Discourse: The Literature of Love, Ovid through Chaucer*. London: Associated University Press, 1998.

Penco, Gregorio. "L'imitazione di Cristo nell'agiografia monastica", *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 18 (1966): 29–32.

Perkinson, Stephen. "*Engin* and *artifice*: Describing Creative Agency at the Court of France, ca. 1400", *Gesta* 41 (2002): 51–67.

——. *The Likeness of the King: A Prehistory of Portraiture in Late Medieval France*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Porter, Arthur Kingsley, "Romanesque Capitals", *Fogg Art Museum Notes* (ed. Margaret E. Gilman), 1/2 (1922): 30.

——. *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture*, 2 vols. Florence: Pantheon, 1928.

Potts, Alex. *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.

——. "Introduction", in Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, trans. H.F. Mallgrave. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2006, 1–53.

Powers, Martin. *Pattern and Person: Ornament, Society and Self in Classical China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Prado-Vilar, Francisco. "Tragedy's Forgotten Beauty: The Medeival Return of Orestes", in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi*, ed. Jas Elsner and Janet Huskinson. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011, 83–118.

Pranger, M.B. *The Artificiality of Christianity: Essays on the Poetics of Monasticism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.

Pressouyre, Léon. "St. Bernard to St. Francis: Monastic Ideals and Iconographic Programs in the Cloister", *Gesta* 12 (1973): 71–92.

Preziosi, Donald, *Brain of the Earth's Body: Art, Museums, and the Phantasms of Modernity.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Prinz, Friedrich. *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich: Kultur und Gesellschaft in Gallien, den Rehinlanden und Bayern am Beishpiel der monastichen Entwicklung (4. Bis 8. Jahrhundert).* Munich: Oldenbourg, 1965.

Pujo, Bernard. *Histoire de Vézelay: Des origins à l'an 2000*. Paris: Perrin, 2000.

Raby, F.J.E. *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953.

——. *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.

Randall, Lillian. *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966.

Real, Manuel Luis. "O Pórtico da Gloria e a escultura portuguesa do seu tempo", in *O Pórtico da Gloria e a arte do seu tempo: Actas simposio internacional, Santiago de Compostela, 3–8 Octubre de 1988*. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 1991, 269–87.

——. "O Românico Português na Perspectiva das Relações Internacionais", in *El Arte Románico en Galicia y Portugal/A Arte Românica em Portugal e Galiza*, ed. Xosé Carlos Valle Pérez and Jorge Rodrigues. A Coruña: Fundación Pedro Barrie de la Mazza; Lisbon: Fundaçao Calouste Gulbenkian, 2001, 30–55.

Reau, Louis. *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien*. Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1958.

Reilly, Bernard. *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065–1109*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Ribard, Jacques. "L'enigme Calogrenant", in *Por le soie amisté. Essays in Honor of Norris J. Lacy*, ed. Keith Busby and Catherine M. Jones. Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2000, 425–34.

Rio, Michel. "Images and Words", *New Literary History* 11, no. 4 (1974): 505–12.

Robertson, Duncan. *The Medieval Saints' Lives: Spiritual Renewal and Old French Literature*. Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1995.

Robertson, D.W. *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962.

Robson, Michael. S*t. Francis of Assisi: The Legend and the Life*. London: G. Chapman, 1999.

Rodrigues, Jorge. "A Escultura Românica", in *História da arte portuguesa*, ed. Paulo Pereira, vol. 1. Lisbon: Temas e Debates, 1995, 265–331.

Romano, John F. "Julian of Vézelay: A Twelfth-Century Critic of his Monastery's Wordly Success", *Medieval Sermon Studies* 50 (2006): 51–69.

Romm, James. *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Rosenwein, Barbara. *To Be the Neighbor of St. Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989.

Rousseau, Philip. *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Rudolph, Conrad. *Artistic Change at St-Denis: Abbot Suger's Program and the Early Twelfth-Century Controversy over Art*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.

——. *The 'Things of Greater Importance': Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.

——. *Violence and Daily Life: Reading, Art, and Polemics in the Cîteaux Moralia in Job*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Ruggles, D. Fairchild. "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Geneaology, and Acculturation in al-Andulus", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34, no. 1 (2004): 65–94.

Rushforth, G. "Magister Gregorius De Mirabilibus Urbis Romae: A New Description of Rome in the Twelfth Century", *Journal of Roman Studies* 9 (1919): 49.

Russo, Daniel, "Étude sur le manuscrit 1 de la Bibliothèque municipale de Semur-en-Auxois : enluminure de manuscrit et réforme monastique", *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre* 10 (2006): n.p.

Rutchick, Leah, "Sculpture Programs in the Moissac Cloister: Benedictine Culture, Memory Systems and Liturgical Performance" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1991).

Salet, Francis. "La basilique de Saint-Andoche de Saulieu", *Congrès archéologique de France* 144 (1986): 235–43.

——. *La Madeleine de Vézelay: Étude iconographique*. Melun: Librairie d'Argences, 1948.

Salisbury, Joyce E. "Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages", in *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, ed. Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior. New York: Routledge, 1997, 9–21.

——. *The Beast Within*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Salvini, Roberto. "La Representation de l'antiquité dans la sculpture romane et une figuration classique: le tireur d'épine", in *La Representation de l'antiquité au moyen âge*, ed. Danielle Buschinger and André Crepin. Vienna: K.M. Halosar, 1982, 299–324.

Samaran, Charles and Robert Marichal, *Catalogue des manuscites dates en écriture latine*, Volume 6. Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1968.

Santos, Reynaldo dos. *O Românico em Portugal*. Lisbon: Editorial Sul.

Saulnier, Lydwine and Neil Stratford. *La sculpture oubliée de Vézelay*. Geneva: Droz, 1984.

Sazama, Kirstin. "The Assertion of Monastic Spiritual and Temporal Authority in the Romanesque Sculpture of Sainte-Madeleine at Vézelay" (PhD dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 1995).

Schapiro, Meyer. *Late Antique, Early Christian and Mediaeval Art*. New York: G. Braziller, 1979.

——. *Parma Ildefonsus: A Romanesque Illuminated Manuscript from Cluny and Related Works.* New York: College Art Association, 1964.

——. *Romanesque Architectural Sculpture: The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures*, ed. Linda Seidel. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

——. *Romanesque Art*. New York: G. Braziller, 1977.

Schmidt, Hans-Peter. "The Semurw. Of Birds and Dogs and Bats", *Persica* 9 (1980): 1–85.

Schmitt, Jean-Claude. "Gestus/Gesticulatio. Contribution à l'étude du vocabulaire medieval des gestes", in *La lexicographie du latin medieval et ses rapports avec les recherches actuelles sur la civilization du Moyen Âge*, ed. Yves Lefèvre. Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1981, 377–90.

——. *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Martin Thorn. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

——. *La Raison des Gestes dans l'Occident médiéval*. Paris: Gallimard, 1990.

Schramm, Percy Ernst and Florentina Mütherrich. *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser: Ein Beitrag zur Herrschergeschichte von Karl dem Großen bis Friedrich II, 768–1250*. Munich: Prestel, 1962.

Scott, John and John O. Ward. *The Vézelay Chronicle*. New York: Pegasus, 1992.

Sears, Elizabeth. "'Reading' Images", in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art*

Historian and the Object, ed. Elizabeth Sears and Thelma Thomas. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002, 1–7.

Seidel, Linda. "The William Hayes Fogg Art Museum", *Gesta* 11 (1972): 64; rpt in *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections*, Volume 1: *New England Museums*, by Walter Cahn and Linda Seidel, 130. New York: Burt Franklin, 1979.

Senra, José Luis. "La realidad material de la iglesia de San Martín de Frómista en el siglo XII: de 1066 a 1904", in *San Martín de Frómista: ¿paradigma o historicismo?* Actas de las Jornadas celebradas en Frómista los dias 17 y 18 de septiembre de 2004. Valladolid: Fundación del Patreimonio Histórico de Castilla y León, 2005, 39–68.

Smalley, Beryl. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964.

Smith, Christine. *Before and After the End of Time: Architecture and the Year 1000*. New York: Harvard Design School, 2000.

Smith, Elizabeth Bradford. *Medieval Art in America: Patters of Collecting 1800–1940*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996.

Smith, Susan L. "The Bride Stripped Bare: A Rare Type of the Disrobing of Christ", *Gesta* 34 (1995): 126–46.

Sommerfeld, John. "The Chimaera Revisited", *Cîteaux: Commentraii Cistercienses. Revued'histoire cistercienne/A Journal of Historical Studies* 38 (1987): 5–13.

Sorrell, Roger. *Saint Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Soussloff, Catherine. "Like a Performance: Performativity and the Historicized Body, from Bellori to Mapplethorpe", in *Acting on the Past: Historical Performance across the Disciplines*, ed. Mark Franko and Annette Richards. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000, 69–98.

Southern, R.W. *The Making of the Middle Ages*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.

Stafford, Barbara. *Visual Analogy: Consciousness as the Art of Connecting*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999.

Stallybrass, Peter and Allon White. *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986.

Steel, Karl. "Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali: Medieval Scholarly Teratology and the Question of the Human", in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, ed. Asa Mitman with Peter J. Dendle. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012, 257–74.

Steinberg, Leo. *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Stock, Brian. *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Bernard Sylvester*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Stoichita, Victor. *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern*

Meta-Painting, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Stratford, Neil. "A Cluny Capital in Hartford (Connecticut)", *Gesta* 27 (1988): 9–21.

——. *Chronos et cosmos: le pilier roman de Souvigny*. Souvigny: Musée de Souvigny, 2005.

——. "La sculpture médiévale de Moutiers-Saint-Jean (Saint-Jeane-de Réome)", *Cahiers archéologique de France* 144 (1986): 157–201.

——. "Sculpture romane originaire de Moutiers-Saint-Jean", *Mémoires de la Commission des Antiquités du Départment de la Côte-d'Or* 32 (1980–81): 327–35.

Strickland, Deborah Haynes. "Introduction: The Future is Necessarily Monstrous", *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 2 (2010): 1–13, http://differentvisions.org/one.html.

——. *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.

——. "The Jews, Leviticus, and the Unclean in Medieval English Bestiaries", in *Beyond the Yellow Badge: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture*, ed. Mitchell B. Merback. Boston, MA: Brill, 2007, 203–32.

Strijbosch, Clara. *The Seafaring Saint: Sources and Analogues of the Twelfth-century* Voyage of Saint Brendan, trans. Thea Summerfeld. Dublin: Four Courts, 2000.

Stuttman, Ferdinand. *Mittelalter*. Bildkataloge des Kestner-Museums Hannover 8. Hannover: Kestner-Museum, 1966.

Sütterlin, Christa. "Ethological Aspects of Apotropaic Symbolism in Art", in *Sociobiology and the Arts*, ed. J.B. Bedaux and Brett Cooke. Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999, 55–78.

——. "Universals in Aportropaic Symbolism: A Bahavioral and Comparative Approach to Some Medieval Sculptures", *Leonardo* 22 (1989): 65–74.

Świewchoski, Zygmunt. *Sculpture romane d'Auvergne*. Clermont-Ferrand: G. de Bussac, 1973.

Taylor, Jerome. *The* Diadascalicon *of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961.

Taylor, Mark. "The Pentecost at Vézelay", *Gesta* 19 (1980): 9–15.

Tetzlaff, Ingeborg. *Romanische Portale in Frankreich: Waage und Schwert, Schlussel und Schrift*. Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1977.

Thibaud, Robert-Jacques. *Saulieu: berceau de l'ésoterisme chrétien*. Joigny: Arbre de Jessé, 1996.

Thibout, Marc. "L'evolution de la faunde dans la sculpture française du moyen âge", *Bulletin de la Société nationale de l'acclimation de France* (1943): 125–41.

Thierry, Augustin. *Lettres sur l'histoire de France*. Paris: Ponthieu, 1827.

Thomson, Rosemarie Garland, ed. *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.

Tissol, Garth. *The Face of Nature: Wit, Narrative, and Cosmic Origins in Ovid's Metamorphoses.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Tolkien, J.R.R. "The Monster and the Critics", *Proceedings of the British Academy* 22 (1936): 245–95.

Tormey, Judith Farr and Alan Tormey. "Art and Ambiguity", *Leonardo* 16, no. 3 (1983): 183–87.

Travis, William. "Of Sirens and Otocentaurs: A Romanesque Apocalypse at Montceaux-l'Étoile", *Artibus et historiae* 45 (2002): 29–62.

Trexler, Richard. "Gendering Jesus Crucified", in *Iconography at the Cross-roads*, ed. Brendan Cassidy. Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, 1990, 107–20.

Turner, Victor. *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967.

Tyler, Elizabeth M. "'The Eyes of the Beholders were Dazzled': Treasure and Artifice in *Encomium Emmae Reginae*", *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999): 247–70.

Tyler, Tom. "Deviants, Donestre, and Debauchees: Here be Monsters", *Culture, Theory & Critique* 49, no. 2 (2008): 113–31.

Ullman, Walter. *The Growth of the Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. London: Methuen, 1962, 312–13.

Valdez del Alamo, Elizabeth. "The Saint's Capital: Talisman in the Cloister", in *Decorations for the Holy Dead: Visual Embellishments on Tombs and Shrines of Saints*, ed. Stephen Lamia and Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002, 111–28.

Van Engen, John. "The 'Crisis of Cenobitism' Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050–1150", *Speculum* 61 (1986): 269–304.

——. "Theophilus Presbyter and Rupert of Deutz: The Manual Arts and Benedictine Theology in the Early Twelfth Century", *Viator* 11 (1980): 147–63.

Verdeyen, Paul. "Introduction", in *Sermons sur le Cantique*, by Bernard of Clairvaux. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2006, 43–46.

Verner, Lisa. *The Epistemology of the Monstrous in the Middle Ages*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Veyne, Paul, *Did the Greeks Believe their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination*, trans. Paula Wissing. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène-Emmanuel. *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle*, Vol. 8. Paris: B. Bance, 1858.

Vittenet, Alfred. *L'abbaye de Moutier-Saint-Jean (Cote-D'Or): Essai Historique.* Mâcon: Protat Frères, 1938.

Vogüé, Antoine de. "La 'Vita Pauli' de saint Jérôme et sa datation: Examen d'un passage-clé (ch. 6)", in *Eulogia: Mélanges offerts à A.R. Bastiaensen à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire*, ed. Gerhardus Johannes Marius Bartelink et al. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1991.

Voisenet, Jacques. *Hommes et bêtes dans le monde médiévale: Le bestiare des clercs du Ve au XIIe siècle*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.

Weingarten, Susan. *The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2005.

Weinryb, Ittai. "The Inscribed Image: Negotiating Sculpture on the Coast of the Adriatic Sea", *Word & Image* 27 (2011): 322–33.

Weir, Anthony and James Jerman. *Images of Lust: Sexual Carvings on Medieval Churches*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1993.

Weitzmann, Kurt. *Ancient Book Illumination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Werckmeister, Otto K. "Jugglers in a Monastery", *Oxford Art Journal* 17 (1994): 60–64.

——. "The Islamic Rider in the Beatus of Girona", *Gesta* 36 (1997): 101–6.

Wetherbee, Winthrop. "Philosophy, Cosmology, and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance", in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

——. *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School Chartres*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Wettstein, Janine. *Sant'Angelo in Formis et la peinture médiévale en Campanie*. Geneva: Droz, 1960.

Wharton, Annabel Jane. *Art of Empire: Painting and Architecture of the Byzantine Periphery: A Comparative Study of Four Provinces*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988.

White, David Gordon. *The Myth of the Dog Man*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

White, Hayden. "The Forms of Wildness: The Archaeology of an Idea", in *The Wild Man Within: Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972, 3–38.

White, Hugh. *Nature, Sex, and Goodness in a Medieval Literary Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Williams, David. *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature*. Buffalo, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.

Winchester, Simon. *The Map that Changed the World: William Smith and the Birth of Modern Geology*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Wirth, Jean. *L'image à l'époque romane*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1999.

Wittkower, Rudolf. "Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 159–97.

Wood, Ian. "A Prelude to Columbanus: The Monastic Achievement in the Burgundian Territories", in *Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism*, ed. H.B. Clarke and Mary Brennan. Oxford: B.A.R., 1981, 3–32.

Yamamoto, Dorothy. *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Yates, Frances. *The Art of Memory*. London: Routledge, 1966.

Ziolkowski, Jan. *Solomon and Marcolf*. Cambridge, MA: Department of the Classics, Harvard University, 2008.

——. "The *Occupatio* by Odo of Cluny: A Poetic Manifesto of Monasticism in the Tenth Century", *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 24/25 (1989–1990): 559–67.

Žižek, Slavoj. *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

Zumthor, Paul. *La mesure du monde: Representation de l'espace au Moyen Age*. Paris: Seuil, 1993.

INDEX

Representations of monsters and the monstrous are common in medieval art and architecture, from the grotesques in the borders of illuminated manuscripts to the symbol of the 'green man', widespread in churches and cathedrals. These mysterious depictions are frequently interpreted as embodying or mitigating the fears symptomatic of a 'dark age'. This book, however, considers an alternative scenario: in what ways did monsters in twelfth-century sculpture help audiences envision, perhaps even achieve, various ambitions? Using examples of Romanesque sculpture from across Europe, with a focus on France and northern Portugal, the author suggests that medieval representations of monsters could service ideals, whether intellectual, political, religious, and social, even as they could simultaneously articulate fears; he argues that their material presence energizes works of art in paradoxical, even contradictory ways. Accordingly, Romanesque monsters resist containment within modern interpretive categories and offer testimony to the density and nuance of the medieval imagination.

KIRK AMBROSE is Associate Professor & Chair, Department of Art and Art History, University of Colorado Boulder.

Cover illustration: Monstrous Battle, left view of nave capital, Vézelay (Photo: Nick Havholm).

Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture